George SURE Shere

METHODS

OF ATTAINING A

LONG AND HEALTHFUL LIFE.

With Means of correcting a

BAD CONSTITUTION.

Written originally in ITALIAN,

BY LEWIS CORNARO,
a Noble Venetian, when he was near
an Hundred Years of Age.

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THE

PREFACE.

LONG life is one of the greateſt bleſſings that we mortals can enjoy; it being what all men naturally deſire and wiſh for. Nay, when men are come to the longeſt date, they deſire yet to live a little longer. But, however, health is that which ſweetens all our other enjoyments, without which the longeſt life would be no more than a living death, and render us burthenſome to ourſelves, and troubleſome to all about us.

But though life be ſo deſirous, and health ſo great a bleſſing, yet how much is both the one and the other undervalued, by the greateſt part of mankind? whatever they may think or ſay of the

ineſtimable value of thoſe precious jewels, yet it is plain, by their practice, that they ſlight and deſpiſe both; and the greateſt part of mankind are hardly ſenſible of the worth of health, 'till they come in good earneſt to be deprived of it.

How many men do we daily ſee, by their intemperance and exceſs, lay the ſeeds of future diſtempers, which either carry them off in the flower of their age, which is the caſe of moſt; or elſe render their old age, if they arrive to it, uneaſy and uncomfortable? and though we ſee others daily drop into the grave before us, and are very apt with juſtice to aſcribe the loſs of our friends, to their living too faſt, yet we cannot forbear treading in the ſame ſteps, and following the ſame courſes, 'till at laſt, by a violent and unnatural death, we are hurried off the ſtage of life after them.

What the noble Cornaro obſerves of the Italians of his time, may very well be applied to this nation at preſent, viz. "that we are not contented "with a plain bill of fare; that we ranſack the elements of earth, air, and "water, for all ſorts of creatures to "gratify our wanton and luxurious ap-"petites: that as if our tables were "too narrow and ſhort to hold our pro-"viſions, we heap them up upon one "another. And laſtly, that to create a "falſe appetite, we rack our cook's in-"ventions for new ſauces and provo-"catives to make the ſuperfluous mor-"ſels go down with the greateſt guſt.

This is not any groundleſs obſervation, but it carries an experimental conviction along with it. Look into all our publick entertainments and feaſts, and ſee whether luxury and intemperance be not too predominant in them. Men, upon ſuch occaſions, think it juſtifiable

to give themſelves the looſe, to eat heartily, and to drink deeply; and many think themſelves not welcome, or well entertained, if the maſter of the feaſt be ſo wiſe as not to give them an occaſion of loſing the Man, and aſſuming the Beaſt.

In oppoſition to ſuch a practice, and to ſhew the good effects of a ſober and regular life, was the deſign of Cornaro, in writing the enſuing treatiſe, as is alſo ours, in handing it into the world in an Engliſh dreſs. What he wrote, was from his own experience, and he felt the benefit of that regimen which he preſcribes to others: and they may meet with the ſame ſucceſs, if with prudence and caution, they apply it to themſelves.

It cannot, indeed, be expected, that every man ſhould tye himſelf up ſtrictly to the obſervation of the ſame rules in his diet, as this noble Venetian followed;

ſince the variety of climates, conſtitution, age, and other circumſtances, may admit of great variations. But this we may aſſert as a reaſonable, general, undeniable maxim, founded upon reaſon, and the nature of things: that for the preſervation of health, and the prolonging a man's life, it is neceſſary that he eat and drink no more, than what is ſufficient to ſupport his natural conſtitution: and on the contrary, whatſoever he eats or drinks beyond that, is ſuperfluous, and tends to the feeding of the corrupt and vicious humours, which will at laſt, though they may be ſtifled for a time, break out into a flame and burn the man quite down, or elſe leave him like a ruined and ſhattered building.

This general maxim which we have laid down, will hold good, with reſpect to men of all ages and conſtitutions, and under whatſoever climate they live; if they have but the courage to make a

due application of it, and to lay a reſtraint upon their unreaſonable appetites.

After all, we will not, we dare not warrant, that the moſt ſtrict and ſober life, will ſecure a man from all diſeaſes, or prolong his days to that age, which Signior Cornaro promiſes them, by his own experience. Natural infirmities and weakneſſes, which a man brings along with him into the world, which he derived from his parents, and could not avoid, may make him ſickly and unhealthful, notwithſtanding all his care and precaution; and outward accidents, (from which no man is free) may cut off the thread of life, before it be half ſpun out. There is no fencing againſt the latter of theſe; but as to the former, a man may, in ſome meaſure, correct and amend them, by a ſober and regular life. In fine, let a man's life be longer or ſhorter, yet ſobriety and temperance ren-

der it pleaſant and delightful. One that is ſober, tho' he live but thirty or forty years, yet lives long, and enjoys all his days, having a free and clear uſe of all his faculties: whilſt the man that gives himſelf up to exceſs, and lays no reſtraint upon his appetites, tho' he prolongs his days to threeſcore or fourſcore years, (which is next to a miracle) yet is his life but one continued dozing ſlumber; his head being always full of fumes; the powers of his ſoul cloudy and dark; the organs of his body weak and worn out; and neither of them fit to diſcharge the proper offices of a rational creature.

Now let any one upon ſerious reflection conſider, which is moſt eligible, a ſober and regular, or an intemperate and diſorderly courſe of life. Certainly there is no great difficulty in determining this queſtion; the main buſineſs is, to perſuade men to put into practice, what

they are really in their own conſciences convinced to be neceſſary for them to do. And this might eaſily be done, were not men bore down, even againſt their own ſentiments, by prejudice, cuſtom, and example. It is therefore requiſite, in order to the farther recommending of ſobriety, to take off, and anſwer ſome objections, (not taken notice of by Cornaro) which ſome of our days make uſe of, to juſtify their contrary practice.

Some of the wits of the age tell us, "that wine, even drank to exceſs, enlivens the fancy, and infuſes bold and great thoughts into a man, makes his writings briſk and airy, a pleaſure to himſelf, and no leſs delightful to others; whilſt others pretending to ſobriety, are dull and flat in all their performances, and nothing but what is phlegmatick and heavy is the product of their genius.

In anſwer to this, it may be ſaid, that this their aſſertion is apparently falſe. What the effects of theſe ſpirits of wine and a heated brain have been, and how much the modern wits have improved by ſuch a method, is evident by the many looſe and prophane plays and poems, which they have of late years publiſhed. There is, indeed, in them a flaſhineſs, ſprightlineſs, and unuſual boldneſs of thought, even the outbraving and ridiculing of all that is good and ſacred. But call you this refined wit? no, 'tis fool-hardineſs, prophaneneſs, and blaſphemy; ſuch as would ſtartle a ſober man to hear or read, and would even make the authors themſelves to bluſh, were they not arriv'd to ſuch a degree of impudence, "not to be aſham'd." The very air of thoſe writings informs you, that they were drawn off from the "lees of wine:" that a debauched and licentious converſation gave them

their ideas of men and manners, ſo forc'd, monſtrous, and ſhocking to nature. Beſides, take thoſe witty men out of their own way, and they are as dull and heavy as any other animals: witneſs thoſe paltry defences, which have hitherto been made for the Engliſh ſtage, in oppoſition to Mr. Collier's view; wherein the poets have wretchedly betrayed their cauſe, and the force of wit and wine has not been able to withſtand a ſober and ſolid argument. But the caſe is not ſo with men that obſerve a due regimen in what they eat or drink: whatever the wits may falſly repreſent, yet we may venture to aſſert, that the beſt diſcourſes which have appeared in print, upon pious, rational, and noble ſubjects, have been the product of cool, calm, and ſober thoughts: no heat, no flaſh, but true and ſolid arguments appear in them; and how unpleaſant and dull ſoever they may ſeem to ſome of a

vitiated and prejudiced temper of mind, yet, by the wiſer part of mankind, (on whoſe judgment one ought chiefly to rely) they will be always had in juſt reſpect and eſteem.

'Tis further urged by ſome others, who have abſolutely abandoned themſelves to ſenſual pleaſures; "that it is "better to live a few years, in the full "enjoyment of the good things of this "world, than to ſpend a century in a "continual reſtraint laid upon their ap-"petites." But the extravagancy of theſe men appears at firſt view; "eat, "drink, and be merry," is all they aim at; and they do not care how ſoon their ſouls ſhall be required of them: they are ſtrangers to the pleaſures which health and good old age can afford to men, and therefore live apace; though, in truth, they do not live at all to any purpoſe. By their exceſſes and extravagancies, they render themſelves uſeleſs

to themſelves and others. They are always in a ferment, and never come to cool and ſedate thoughts of things. Hence it was, that a noble peer of this kingdom, one of a large genius, and quick parts, was hurry'd by an intemperate ſort of life to ſuch extravagancies, as, for ſeveral years, not to be his own man; and, tho' he lived not half the age of a man, yet, by his exceſſes, he did not enjoy the half of thoſe days wherein he lived. He perverted thoſe parts which God had given him, and made them the pandars of vice and debauchery; which occaſioned a noble friend of his to reflect upon him in theſe words:

Such nauſeous ſongs, by a late author made,
Draw an unwilling cenſure on his ſhade.
Not that warm thoughts of the approaching joy,
Can ſhock the niceſt, or the chaſteſt cloy:
But obſcene words, too looſe to raiſe deſire,
Like heaps of embers, only quench the fire.

Marquis of Normanby's Eſſay on Heroick Poetry.

But not to inſiſt any longer upon the recommendation of a ſober and regular courſe of life, which is the deſign of Cornaro's treatiſe, and which no wiſe man can't but approve of; we ſhall only give you ſome ſhort account of this tranſlation of it.

The firſt chapter was formerly publiſhed in Engliſh, in the ſmall tract of Leſſius concerning health; but ſo far mutilated, that it is not the ſame with the original, and falls very much ſhort of it. How it came to paſs, that it was thus lamely handed into the world, we ſhall not now enquire; but it may very fairly ſerve as a juſtification for our new verſion of that diſcourſe; eſpecially ſince we have rendered the whole, and join'd three other diſcourſes with other matters relating thereto. It was thought proper to leave out ſome few things, which being writ by a ſtanch Roman Catholick, ſeemed to reflect upon the

Proteſtant Religion: But bating this, you have the whole of Cornaro's treatiſes, digeſted into ſo many diſtinct chapters.

But not to weary our reader with too long a Preface, we ſhall recommend him to the peruſal of the book itſelf, and to the practice of the rules contained therein, according as his own diſcretion ſhall direct him; not queſtioning, but that upon a due experience, he will thank Cornaro for the original, and Us for the verſion of it.

VALE.

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THE SURE WAY OF ATTAINING A LONG AND HEALTHFUL LIFE.

CHAP. I.

Of a Sober and Regular Life.

NOTHING is more certain, than that cuſtom becomes a ſecond nature, and has a great influence upon our bodies. Nay, it has too often more power over the mind, than reaſon itſelf. The honeſt-

eſt man alive, in keeping company with libertines, by degrees forgets the maxims of probity, which he had imbibed from the very breaſt, and gives himſelf the looſe in thoſe vices which he ſees practiſed. If he be ſo happy as to relinquiſh that bad company, and to meet with better, virtue will triumph in its turn: and he inſenſibly reſumes the wiſdom which he had abandoned. In a word, all the alterations which we perceive in the temper, carriage, and manners of moſt men, have ſcarce any other foundation, but the force and prevalency of cuſtom.

I have obſerved, that it is cuſtom which has given riſe to two very dangerous evils within a little time in Italy; the firſt I reckon to be flattery and ceremonies; and the ſecond, intemperance both in eating and drinking.

The firſt of theſe baniſhes out of human converſation, all plain-dealing, frankneſs and ſincerity: and againſt the latter I declare open war,

as being the moſt deſtructive of health, and the greateſt enemy it has.

'Tis an unhappineſs into which the men of this age are fallen, that variety of diſhes is a-la-mode, and become ſo far preferable to frugality. And yet the one is the product of temperance; whilſt pride, and an unreſtrained appetite, is the parent of the other. Notwithſtanding the difference of their origin, yet prodigality is at preſent ſtiled magnificence, generoſity and grandeur, and is commonly eſteemed of in the world; whilſt frugality paſſes for avarice, and ſordidneſs of ſpirit in the eyes of moſt men. Here is a viſible error, which cuſtom and habit have eſtabliſh'd.

This error has ſo far ſeduced us, that it has prevailed upon us to renounce a frugal way of living, tho' taught us by nature, even from the firſt age of the world, as being that which would prolong our days; and haſt caſt us into thoſe exceſſes, which ſerve only to abridge the number of

them. We become old, before we have been able to taſte the pleaſure of being young; and the time which ought to be the ſummer of our lives, is often the beginning of their winter. We ſoon perceive our ſtrength to fail, and weakneſs to come on apace, and decline, even before we come to perfection. On the contrary, ſobriety maintains us in the natural ſtate wherein we ought to be: our youth is laſting, and our manhood attended with a vigor that does not begin to decay, till after a great many years. A whole century muſt be run out, before wrinkles can be formed on the face, or gray hairs grow on the head. This is ſo true, that when men were not addicted to voluptuouſneſs, they had more ſtrength and vivacity at fourſcore, than we have at preſent at forty.

O unhappy Italy! doſt thou not perceive that gluttony and exceſs robs thee every year of more inhabitants, than peſtilence, war and famine could have deſtroyed? Thy

true plagues are the frequent feaſtings, which are ſo extravagant, that no tables can be made large enough to hold that number of diſhes which prodigality lays upon them, but they are forced to be heaped upon one another in pyramids. What madneſs, what fury is this? regulate this diſorder, if not for God's ſake, yet for thy own. I am ſure there is no ſin, that diſpleaſes him more, nor any voluptuouſneſs that can be more pernicious to thyſelf. Endeavour then to heal thyſelf of this, as being one of thoſe epidemical diſtempers, from which thou mayeſt be preſerved by wholeſome food, and by the precautions that may prevent them. It is very eaſy to avoid the evils which an exceſs in eating or drinking may bring upon us; nor is it any hard matter to find out a ſovereign remedy againſt repletion, ſince nature itſelf has taught us it. Let us only give it what it requires, and not over-charge it; for a ſmall matter ſuffices nature. The rules of tem-

perance are derived from thoſe of right reaſon. Let us accuſtom our ſelves to eat only to ſupport life; what is more than neceſſary for our nouriſhment, ſows the ſeeds of ſickneſs and death; it is a pleaſure, for which we muſt pay very dear, and which can neither be innocent, nor excuſable, ſince it may be ſo prejudicial to us.

How many have I ſeen cut off, in the flower of their days, by the unhappy cuſtom of high-feeding? how many excellent friends has gluttony deprived me of, who might have been ſtill an ornament to the world, an honour to their country, and have occaſioned me as much ſatisfaction in enjoying them, as now I have ſorrow in loſing them?

'Tis to put a ſtop to this ſpreading contagion, that I have undertaken to ſhew in this ſmall tract, that the number and variety of diſhes is a fatal abuſe, which ought to be corrected, by living ſoberly, as did the patriarchs of old. Several young per-

ſons, who for their good qualities, merit my eſteem, having loſt their fathers ſooner than they could have expected, have expreſſed a great deſire of being acquainted with my manner of living. I could not but think their curioſity very reaſonable, ſince nothing is more reaſonable, than to wiſh for long life. The more we advance in years, the larger will our experience be; and if nature, which aims only at our good, adviſes us to grow old, and concurs with us in that deſign, it is becauſe ſhe is ſenſible that the body being weakned by time, which deſtroys all things, the mind, when diſengaged from the ſnares of voluptuouſneſs, is more at leiſure to make uſe of its reaſon, and to taſte the ſweets of virtue. Hereupon I was willing to ſatisfy thoſe perſons, and at the ſame time to do ſome ſervice to the publick, by declaring what were the motives that induced me to renounce intemperance, and live a ſober life; by ſhewing the method I obſerve, and

what benefit I find thereby; and laſtly, by demonſtrating, that nothing can be more beneficial to a man, than to obſerve a regimen, that it is practicable, and very neceſſary to be followed.

I ſay then, that the weakneſs of my conſtitution, which was conſiderably increaſed by my way of living, caſt me into ſo deplorable a condition, that I was forced to bid a final adieu to all feaſtings, to which I had all my life-long a violent inclination. I was ſo often engaged in exceſſes of this kind, that my tender conſtitution could not hold up under the fatigues of them. I fell into ſeveral diſtempers, ſuch as pains of the ſtomach, the cholick, and the gout. I had a lingring fever, and an intolerable thirſt continually hanging upon me. This made me deſpair of any cure, and though I was then not above 35 or 40 years old, yet I had no hopes of finding any other end of my diſtempers, but what ſhould end my life too.

The beſt phyſicians in Italy made uſe of all their ſkill for my recovery, but without ſucceſs. At laſt when they quite deſpair'd of me, they told me that they knew only of one remedy that could cure me, if I had reſolution enough to undertake and continue it; to wit, a ſober and regular life, which they exhorted me to live the remainder of my days, aſſuring me, that if intemperance had brought ſo many diſtempers, it was only temperance that could free me from them.

I reliſh'd this propoſal; and perceived, that notwithſtanding the miſerable condition to which my intemperance had reduced me, yet I was not ſo incurable, but the contrary might recover, or at leaſt eaſe me. And I was the more eaſily perſuaded to it, becauſe I knew ſeveral perſons of a great age, and a bad conſtitution, who only prolonged their lives by obſerving a regimen; whilſt, on the other hand, I knew others who were born with a wonderful conſti-

tution, and yet broke it by their debaucheries. It ſeemed very natural to me, that a different way of living and acting produces different effects; ſince art may conduce to correct, perfect, weaken or deſtroy nature, according to the good or bad uſe that is made of it.

The phyſicians beginning to find me tractable, added to what they had before told me, that I muſt either chuſe a regimen, or death; that I could not live, if I did not follow their advice; and that if I deferr'd much longer taking my reſolutions accordingly, it would be too late to do it. This was home: I was loth to die ſo ſoon, and I could not tell how to bear the thoughts of it; beſides, I was convinc'd of their experience and ability. In ſhort, being morally certain, that my beſt way was to believe them, I reſolved upon putting into practice this courſe of life, how auſtere ſoever it ſeem'd to me.

I intreated my phyſicians to inform me exactly, after what manner

I ought to govern myſelf? to this they reply'd, that I muſt always manage myſelf as a ſick perſon; eat nothing but what was good, and that in a ſmall quantity.

They had a long time before preſcribed the ſame thing to me; but, till then, I made a jeſt of it. When I was cloyed with the diet they ordered me, I did eat of all thoſe meats which they had forbidden; and perceiving myſelf hot and dry, I drank wine in abundance. However, I do not boaſt of this my conduct: I was one of thoſe imprudent patients, who not being able to reſolve upon doing whatever is preſcribed them for their health, mind nothing elſe but deceiving their phyſicians, though they prove the greateſt cheats to themſelves at laſt.

As ſoon as I reſolv'd to believe my phyſicians, and thought that it was a diſgrace not to have courage enough to be wiſe; I accuſtomed myſelf ſo much to live ſoberly, that I contracted a habit of ſo doing, without any

trouble or violence offered to my ſelf. In a little time I found relief; and (which may ſeem to ſome incredible) at the year's end, I found my ſelf not only on the mending hand, but I was perfectly cured of all my diſtempers.

When I ſaw I was recovered, and began to taſte the ſweets of this ſort of reſurrection, I made abundance of reflections upon the uſefulneſs of a regular life: I admired the efficacy of it; and perceived, that if it had been ſo powerful as to cure me, it would be capable enough of preſerving me from thoſe diſtempers to which I had been always ſubject.

The experience I had thereof removing all farther ſcruple, I began to ſtudy what food was proper for me. I was minded to try, whether what pleaſed my taſte, were beneficial, or prejudicial to my health; and whether the proverb were true, which ſays, 'that what delights the 'palate, cannot but be good for the 'heart?' I found it to be falſe; and

that it only ſerves as an excuſe to the ſenſualiſts, who are for indulging themſelves in whatever might pleaſe their appetites.

Formerly I could not drink my wine with ice; I loved heady wines, melons, all ſorts of raw fruits, ſalads, ſalt meats, high ſauces, and baked meats, notwithſtanding they were prejudicial to me. Hereupon I made no account of the proverb; and being convinced of its falſity, I made choice of ſuch wines and meats as agreed with my conſtitution: I proportion'd the quantity thereof according to the ſtrength of my ſtomach. I declined all diet that did not agree with me; and made it a law to myſelf, to lay a reſtraint upon my appetite; ſo that I always roſe from table, with a ſtomach to eat more if I pleaſed. In a word, I entirely renounced intemperance, and made a vow to continue the remainder of my life under the ſame regimen that I had obſerv'd: a happy reſolution this, the keeping whereof

has freed me from all my infirmities, which without it were incurable! I never before lived a year together, without falling once at leaſt into ſome violent diſtemper; but this never happened to me afterwards: on the contrary, I have been always healthful, ever ſince I have been temperate.

The nouriſhment which I take, being in quality and quantity juſt enough to ſuffice nature, breeds no ſuch corrupt humours, as ſpoil the beſt conſtitutions. 'Tis true, indeed, that beſides this precaution, I made uſe of many others. For inſtance, I took care to keep myſelf from heats and colds, I abſtained from all violent exerciſes, as alſo from ill hours and women. I no longer lived in places where was an unwholeſome air, and took ſpecial care to avoid the being expoſed to violent winds, or to the exceſſive heat of the ſun. All theſe cautions may ſeem morally impoſſible to thoſe men, who, in their tranſactions in the world, fol-

low no other guides but their own paſſions; and yet they are not hard to be practis'd, when a man can be ſo juſt to himſelf, as to prefer the preſervation of his health to all the pleaſures of ſenſe, and neceſſary hurry of buſineſs.

I likewiſe found it advantageous to me, not to abandon myſelf to melancholy, by baniſhing out of my mind whatever might occaſion it: I made uſe of all the powers of my reaſon, to reſtrain the force of thoſe paſſions, whoſe violence does often break the conſtitution of the ſtrongeſt bodies. 'Tis true, indeed, that I was not always ſo much a philoſopher, nor yet ſo cautious, but that ſometimes I fell into thoſe diſorders that I would have avoided; but this rarely happen'd: and the guard I kept over my appetite, which ought chiefly to be minded, prevented all the pernicious conſequences, which might have ariſen from my petty irregularities.

This is certain, that the paſſions have leſs influence, and cauſe leſs diſorder, in a body that is regular in its diet, than in another which gives the looſe to the cravings of an inordinate appetite. Galen made this obſervation before me; and I might produce ſeveral authorities to ſupport this opinion, but I will go only upon mine own experience. It was impoſſible for me ſometimes to abſtain from the extremes of hot and cold, and to get an entire maſtery over all the occaſions of trouble which had croſs'd my whole life; but yet theſe emotions made no alteration in the ſtate of my health: and I met with a great many inſtances of perſons, who ſunk under a leſs weight, both of body and mind.

There was in our family a conſiderable ſuit of law depending againſt ſome perſons, whoſe might overcame our right. One of my brothers, and ſome of my relati-

ons, who having never ſmarted for their debauches, were the more free to indulge them, could not conquer that concern which the loſs of this ſuit of law wrought in them, and perfectly died of grief. I was as ſenſible as they were of the injuſtice that was done us, but I did not die for it; and I attribute their loſs, and my welfare, to the difference in our way of living. I was made amends for that diſgrace, by the comfort I had of not ſinking under it; and now make no manner of doubt, but that the paſſions are leſs violent in a man that lives ſoberly, than in one that does not.

At ſeventy years of age, I had another experiment of the uſefulneſs of my regimen. A buſineſs of an extraordinary conſequence drawing me into the country, my coach-horſes went faſter than I would have them; being laſh'd with the whip, got a-head, and ran away with me. I was overthrown, and dragg'd a long way before they could ſtay the

horſes. They took me out of the coach, with my head broken, a leg and an arm out of joint, and, in a word, in a very lamentable condition. As ſoon as they had brought me home again, they ſent for the phyſicians, who did not expect I could live three days to an end: however, they reſolv'd upon letting of me blood, to prevent the coming of a fever, which uſually happens in ſuch caſes. I was ſo confident, that the regular life which I had led, had prevented the contracting of any ill humours which I might be afraid of, that I oppos'd their preſcription. I order'd them to dreſs my head, to ſet my leg and my arm, to rub me with ſome ſpecifick oils, proper for bruiſes; and, without any other remedies, I was ſoon cur'd, to the great aſtoniſhment of the phyſicians, and of all thoſe who knew me. From hence I infer, that a regular life is an excellent preſervative againſt all natural evils, and that intemperance produces quite contrary effects.

About five years ago, I was over-perſuaded to do a thing, which had like to have coſt me dear. My relations, whom I love, and who have a real tenderneſs for me; my friends, with whom I was willing to comply in any thing that was reaſonable; laſtly, my phyſicians, who were looked upon as the oracles of health, did all agree, that I eat too little; that the nouriſhment I took, was not ſufficient for one of my years; that I ought not only to ſupport nature, but likewiſe to increaſe the vigor of it, by eating a little more than I did. It was in vain for me to repreſent to them, that nature is content with a little; that this little having preſerved me ſo long in health, cuſtom was become a ſecond nature to me: that it was more reaſonable, ſince natural heat abates in proportion as one grows older, that I ſhould likewiſe abridge my allowance in diet.

To add the greater force to my opinion, I mentioned to them the proverb which ſaith, 'he that eats 'little, eats much;' that is, if a man is willing to live long in the enjoyment of his food, let him live ſparingly. I likewiſe told them, that what one leaves at a meal does more good, than what one has already eaten. But all this could not prevail upon them; and being wearied with their importunities, I was forced to ſubmit. Having therefore before been uſed to take twelve ounces, in bread, ſoups, yolks of eggs, and meat, I increas'd it to fourteen ounces a day; and drinking about fourteen ounces of wine, I added two ounces more and made it ſixteen.

This augmentation of diet was ſo prejudicial to me, that as briſk as I was, I began to be ſad, and out of humour; every thing offended me, and upon the leaſt occaſion I broke out into a paſſion, ſo that a dog (as they ſay) would not live with me.

At twelve days end, I was taken with a violent fit of the cholick, and that followed by a continual fever, which tormented me five and thirty days together, and for the firſt fifteen days put me into ſuch an agony, that it was impoſſible for me to take a quarter of an hour's ſleep at a time. There was no occaſion to aſk my friends whether they deſpair'd of my life, and whether they repented of the advice they had given me; for they ſeveral times believed that I was a dying man, juſt giving up the ghoſt. However, I recovered, tho' I was ſeventy eight years of age, and tho' we had a harder winter than is uſual in our climate.

Nothing freed me from this danger, but the regimen which I had ſo long obſerved. It had prevented me from contracting thoſe ill humours, with which they are troubled in their old age, who are not ſo wiſe as to take care of themſelves whilſt they are young. I did not perceive in me the old leaven of thoſe humours, and

having nothing to ſtruggle with, but the new ones, which were occaſioned by this ſmall addition to my diet, I oppoſed and conquered my indiſpoſition, notwithſtanding its force.

From this ſickneſs, and my recovery from it, we may diſcern, what an influence a regimen has over us, which preſerved me from death; and what a power repletion has, which in ſo few days brought me to the laſt extremity. 'Tis probable, that order being neceſſary for the conſervation of the univerſe, and our bodily life being nothing elſe but a harmony and perfect agreement between the elementary qualities of which our bodies are compoſed, we cannot live long in a diſorderly courſe of life, of which nothing but corruption can poſſibly come.

Order indeed is ſo exceeding beneficial, that it cannot be too ſtrictly obſerved in every thing. It is by the means of this that we arrive to the perfection of arts, and an eaſy accompliſhment in the ſciences. It

renders armies victorious, keeps up the civil polity of cities, and concord in families: it renders whole nations flouriſhing; in a word, it is the ſupport and preſerver both of the civil and natural life, and the beſt remedy that can be applied to all evils, whether publick or private.

When a diſintereſted phyſician waits upon a patient, let him remember to recommend to him his diet, and eſpecially a regimen therein, in order to his recovery. This is certain, that if all men would live regularly and frugally, there would be ſo few ſick perſons, that there would hardly be any occaſion for remedies; every one would become his own phyſician, and would be convinced that he never met with a better. It would be to little purpoſe to ſtudy the conſtitution of other men; every one, if he would but apply himſelf to it, would always be better acquainted with his own, than with that of another; every one would be capable of making thoſe experi-

ments for himſelf, which another could not do for him, and would be the beſt judge of the ſtrength of his own ſtomach, and of the food which is agreeable thereto; for, in one word, it is next to impoſſible to know exactly the conſtitution of another, the conſtitutions of men being as different from one another, as their complexion. Who now, for inſtance, would imagine that old wine ſhould be hurtful, and new wine wholſome to me? that things which are looked upon to be naught by nature, ſhould refreſh and ſtrengthen me? what phyſician could have obſerved in me thoſe effects, ſo uncommon in moſt bodies, and ſo contrary to the notions of mankind, when I myſelf was at no ſmall pains in diſcovering the cauſes thereof, after abundance of tryals, which prove the difference of mens conſtitutions?

Since no man, therefore, can have a better phyſician than himſelf, nor a more ſovereign antidote than a regimen, every one ought to follow

my example; that is, to ſtudy his own conſtitution, and to regulate his life according to the rules of right reaſon.

I own, indeed, that a phyſician may be ſometimes neceſſary; ſince there are ſome diſtempers which all human prudence cannot provide againſt. There happen ſome unavoidable accidents, which ſeize us after ſuch a manner, as to deprive our judgment of the liberty it ought to have to be a comfort to us. It is fooliſhneſs then wholly to rely upon nature, it muſt have a ſupply, and recourſe muſt be had to ſome one or other for it.

If the preſence of a friend who comes 'to viſit a ſick perſon,' and to teſtify the concern he has for his illneſs, be a comfort and refreſhment to him, there is greater reaſon to believe, that the viſit of a phyſician muſt needs be more agreeable, being a friend upon whoſe advice and care we may depend for a ſpeedy recovery of our health; but for the main-

taining of that health, there needs no other ſupport but a ſober and regular life. It is a ſpecifick and natural medicine, which preſerves the man, how tender ſoever his conſtitution be, and prolongs his life to above a hundred years, ſpares him the pain of a violent death, ſends him quietly out of the world, when the radical moiſture is quite ſpent, and which, in ſhort, has all the properties that are fancied to be in Aurum Potabile, and the Elixir which a great many perſons have ſought after in vain.

But alas! moſt men ſuffer themſelves to be ſeduced by the charms of a voluptuous life. They have not courage enough to deny their appetites; and being over-perſuaded by their prejudices ſo far, as to think they cannot prevent the gratification of them, without abridging too much of their pleaſures, they form ſyſtems whereby to perſuade themſelves, that it is more eligible to live ten years leſs, than to be upon the reſtraint,

and deprived of whatever may gratify the cravings of their appetites.

Alas! they know not the value of ten years healthful life in an age, when a man may enjoy the full uſe of his reaſon, and make an advantage of all his experiences: in an age wherein a man may appear to be truly ſuch by his wiſdom and conduct; laſtly, in a time wherein he is in a condition of reaping the fruits of his ſtudies and labours.

To inſtance only in the ſciences; it is certain, that the beſt books which we have extant, were compoſed in thoſe laſt ten years which the intemperate deſpiſe; and that men's minds growing to perfection, proportionably as their bodies grow old, arts and ſciences would have loſt a great deal of their perfection, if all the great men who were profeſſors of that, had lived ten years ſhorter than they did. For my part, I think it proper to keep the fatal day of my death as far off as I can. If this had not been my reſolution, I

ſhould not have finiſhed ſeveral pieces, which will be both pleaſing and inſtructing to thoſe who come after me.

The ſenſualiſts farther object, that it is impoſſible to live a regular life. To this I reply; that Galen, who was ſo great a man, made choice of it, and adviſed others to do the ſame, as being the beſt courſe they could take. Plato, Cicero, Iſocrates, and a great many famous men of paſt ages embraced it; and in our time, pope Paul Farneze, cardinal Bembo, and two of our Doges, Lando and Dorato, have practiſed it, and thereby arrived to an extreme old age. I might inſtance in others of a meaner extract; but, having followed this rule myſelf, I think I cannot produce a more convincing proof of its being practicable, and that the greateſt trouble to be met with therein, is the firſt reſolving and entring upon ſuch a courſe of life.

You will tell me that Plato, as ſober a man as he was, yet affirmed,

that a man devoted to the adminiſtration of the government in publick affairs, can hardly lead an exact and regular life, being often obliged in the ſervice of the ſtate, to be expoſed to the badneſs of weather, to the fatigues of travelling, and to eat whatever he can meet with. This cannot be denied; but then I maintain, that theſe things will never haſten a man's death, provided he that is in this poſt accuſtoms himſelf to a frugal way of living. There is no man, in what condition ſoever he is, but may prevent his over eating; and cure himſelf of thoſe diſtempers that are cauſed by repletion. They who have the charge of publick affairs committed to their truſt, are more obliged to it than any others: where there is no glory to be got for their country, they ought not to ſacrifice themſelves: they ſhould preſerve themſelves to ſerve it; and if they purſue my method, it is certain they would ward off the diſtempers which heat and cold, and fa-

tigues might bring upon them; or ſhould they be diſturbed with them it would be but very lightly.

It may likewiſe be objected, that if one who is well, is dieted like one that is ſick, he will be at a loſs about the choice of his diet, when any diſtemper comes upon him. To this I ſay, that nature, which preſerves all beings as far as poſſible, teaches us how we ought to govern our ſelves in ſuch a caſe. It begins by depriving us altogether of our appetites, that we can eat little or nothing at all. At that time, whether the ſick perſon has been ſober or intemperate, no other food ought to be made uſe of, but ſuch as is proper for the condition wherein he is; ſuch as broth, jellies, cordials, barley-water, &c. When his recovery will permit him to make uſe of a more ſolid nouriſhment, he muſt take leſs than he was uſed to before his ſickneſs, and notwithſtanding the eagerneſs of his appetite, he muſt take care of his ſtomach, till he has

a perfect cure. Should he do otherwiſe he would overburden nature, and infallibly relapſe into the danger from whence he eſcaped. But notwithſtanding this, I dare aver, that he who leads a ſober and regular life, will hardly ever be ſick; or if he is, it will be but ſeldom, and for a ſhort time. This way of living preſerves us from thoſe humours which occaſion our infirmities, and by conſequence heals us of all thoſe diſtempers which they engender. The defect of the cauſe does phyſically prevent the production of the effect; and the effect cannot be dangerous and violent, when the cauſe itſelf is but ſlight and weak.

Since then ſobriety lays a reſtraint upon our paſſions, preſerves our health, and is both wholeſome and beneficial to us, ought it not to be followed and embraced by all men? ſelf-love, if well underſtood, adviſes us to it: it is neither impoſ-

ſible nor difficult; and the method I take, ought to diſcourage nobody from undertaking it. For I do not pretend to perſuade every-body to eat as little as I do, or to debar themſelves from the uſe of a great many things from which I refrain. I eat but little, becauſe my ſtomach is nice, and I abſtain from certain diſhes becauſe they are prejudicial to me. They who are not offended by them, are not obliged to refrain from them, but are allowed the uſe of them; only they ought to abſtain from eating too much, even of that which agrees with them, becauſe it would be prejudicial to them, ſince an over-charged ſtomach cannot ſo eaſily digeſt it. In ſhort, he that is offended at nothing, has no occaſion of enquiring into the quality of his diet, he ought only to be cautious of the quantity thereof.

It ſignifies nothing to tell me, that there are ſeveral who deny themſelves nothing, do yet live as long

without infirmities, as they who are ſober. This is but rare, uncertain, hazardous, and in a manner miraculous. The inſtances of this nature, do not at all juſtify the conduct of thoſe perſons, who reckon it an extraordinary happineſs, and are commonly the betrayers of their good conſtitution. It is more certain, that an infirm old man will live longer by obſerving a ſtrict regimen, than a young, vigorous, and healthful man will, that gives the looſe to his appetite.

However, this is certain, that a good conſtitution, with the ſupport of a regular life, will carry a man farther than a weak one, though managed with an equal degree of care. God and nature may form bodies ſo ſtrong and robuſt, as to be proof againſt all that is contrary to us; as I have obſerved at Venice, the procurator, Thomas Matereni, and at Padua the chevalier Antonio Capo di Vacca; but among a thouſand one ſhall hardly meet with the like. All

others who are for a long and healthful life, who would die without an agony, and only by a pure diſſolution, who would, laſtly, enjoy the advantages of a happy old age, will never come to what they aim at, without ſobriety.

It is temperance alone which ſupports our conſtitution, without any alteration; it creates nothing but ſweet and wholeſome humours, which ſending up no vapours to the brain, leave the mind the perfect uſe of the organs, and are no hindrance from raiſing its contemplation from the wonders of the world, to the conſideration of the power of its creator. A man can be never the better for thoſe reflections, when his head is full of the vapours of wine and meat. But when once theſe fumes are gone, his underſtanding is clear, he obſerves and diſcerns a thouſand agreeable things, which he would not have known or comprehended in another ſtate. He can then diſcern the falſity of thoſe plea-

ſures, which voluptuouſneſs promiſes, the real goods with which virtue loads us, and the unhappineſs of thoſe whom a fatal deluſion renders ſlaves to their paſſions.

The three moſt dangerous, are, the pleaſure of the taſte, the hunting after honours, and the poſſeſſion of riches: theſe deſires increaſe with the age of old men; who having always led a diſorderly life, have ſuffered their luſts to take root in their youth and manhood. A wiſe man does not ſtay ſo long before he corrects them; he declares betimes a war againſt his paſſions, of which he does not obtain the maſtery till after ſeveral ſtruggles; and then virtue in its turn triumphs, and crowns the man with the bleſſings of heaven, and the eſteem of all the world.

Is he ready to pay the tribute that is due to nature? full of acknowledgments for the favours already received from God, he throws himſelf into the arms of his future mercy. He is not afraid of thoſe

everlaſting puniſhments, which they deſerve, who by their intemperance offer violence to their own lives. He dies without complaining, becauſe he was not to live for ever; and his reaſon ſweetens the bitterneſs of this fatality. In a word, he leaves the world generouſly, when in a long tract of happy years he has had time enough to enjoy his virtue and reputation; and conſiders, that not one in a thouſand, who have lived otherwiſe than he has done, has arrived to ſuch an age.

He is comforted the more, upon conſidering, that this ſeparation will not be violent, painful or feveriſh. His end is calm, and he expires like a lamp when the oil is ſpent, no delirium, no convulſions attending him: and ſo he paſſes from this corruptible life, to that whoſe eternal happineſs is the reward of the virtuous.

O happy, bleſſed, and regular life! how worthy art thou of our eſteem;

and how doſt thou deſerve to be preferr'd before thy contrary? we need only reflect upon the different effects of both, to be ſenſible of the advantages that attend thee; tho' thy name alone is ſufficient to attract that eſteem which thou deſerveſt.

Having thus given the reaſons, which made me abandon an intemperate, and take up with a ſober life, as alſo the method I obſerved in it, and the benefit which I reap'd from it, and the advantage which others may receive from the practice thereof; I ſhall now direct my diſcourſe to thoſe, who ſuppoſe it to be no benefit to grow old; becauſe they fancy, that when a man is paſt ſeventy, his life is nothing but weakneſs, infirmity and miſery. In the firſt place, I can aſſure them, that they are mightily miſtaken; and that I find myſelf, as old as I am, (which is much beyond what they ſpeak of) to be in the moſt pleaſant and delightſome ſtage of life.

To prove that I have reaſon fo
what I ſay, they need only enquir
how I ſpend my time, what are m
uſual pleaſures and buſineſs; and t
hear the teſtimony of all thoſe tha
know me. They unanimouſly teſt
fy, that the life I lead, is not a dea
and languiſhing life, but as happy
one as can be wiſh'd for in this worl

They will tell you, that I am ſti
ſo ſtrong at fourſcore and three, a
to mount a horſe without any help
that I can not only go down ſtair
without any concern, but likewi
deſcend a hill all on foot: that I a
always merry, always pleas'd, a
ways in humour; maintaining a hap
py peace in my own mind, the ſwee
neſs and ſerenity whereof appear a
all times in my countenance.

Beſides, they know that 'tis in m
power to paſs away the time ver
pleaſantly; having nothing to hin
der me from taſting all the plea
ſures of an agreeable ſociety, wit
ſeveral perſons of parts and worth

When I am willing to be alone, I ead good books, and ſometimes fall o writing; ſeeking always an occaion of being uſeful to the publick, nd doing ſervice to private perſons, s far as poſſible. I do all this with-ut the leaſt trouble; and in ſuch imes as I ſet apart for theſe employ-ients.

I dwell in a houſe, which beſides s being ſituated in the pleaſanteſt art of Padua, may be looked upon s the moſt convenient and moſt a-reeable manſion in that city. I here make me apartments proper or the winter and ſummer, which erve as a ſhelter to defend me from he extreme heat of the one, and he rigid coldneſs of the other. I alk out in my gardens, along my anals and walks; where I always neet with ſome little thing or other o do, which, at the ſame time, em-loys and diverts me.

I ſpend the months of April, May, September, and October, at my

country-houſe, which is the fineſt ſituation imaginable: the air of it is good, the avenues neat, the gardens magnificent, the waters clear and plentiful; and this ſeat may well paſs for an inchanted palace. When I am there, I ſometimes divert myſelf with a ſport that agrees moſt with my age; viz. in going out with a ſetting-dog, or with terriers.

Sometimes I take a walk to my Villa, all whoſe ſtreets terminate at a large ſquare; in the midſt of which is a pretty neat church, and large enough for the bigneſs of the pariſh.

Through this Villa runs a rivulet; and the country about is enriched with fruitful and well cultivated fields; having at preſent a conſiderable number of inhabitants. This was not ſo, anciently: it was a marſhy place, and the air ſo bad, that it was more proper for frogs and toads, than for men to dwell in. I thought it adviſable to drain the

marſh-lands; ſo that being dry, the air became more wholeſome. Several families have ſettled there, and rendred the place very populous; where, I may ſay, that I have dedicated to the Lord a church, altars, and hearts to worſhip him: which reflection is a great comfort to me, as often as I make it.

Sometimes I pay a viſit to my friends of the neighbouring towns, who procure me an acquaintance with the ingenious men of the place. I diſcourſe with them about architecture, painting, ſculpture, mathematicks, and agriculture; ſciences for which I had all my life long a great fondneſs, and the rather, becauſe they were very much in eſteem in my time.

I ſaw with curioſity the new pieces of workmanſhip; and it was a new pleaſure to me, to take a ſecond view of thoſe which I had already ſeen; and I am always learning ſomething that I am pleaſed to know.

I viſit publick buildings, palaces, gardens, antiquities, ſquares, churches, and fortifications; paſſing by no place that may gratify my curioſity, or give me any new light into things.

That which charmed me moſt in the little journeys I took, was the various proſpects of places through which I went: the plains, the hills, the rivulets, the caſtles and the villages, were as ſo many objects that offered themſelves with pleaſure to my ſight, and afforded a delightful view.

In ſhort, the pleaſures I take, are not imperfect upon the account of the weakneſs of my organs: I ſee and hear as well as ever I did in my life: all my ſenſes are as free and as perfect as ever; eſpecially my taſte, which is better with that little which I eat at preſent, than when I was a ſlave to my appetite.

Changing of beds is no hindrance to my repoſe: I ſleep very ſound-

ly; and if I dream, my dreams are pleaſant.

It is with a great deal of ſatisfaction, that I ſee the end of a work of ſuch importance to this ſtate, which has rendered ſo many places fertile, that before were uncultivated and uſeleſs; a thing I never expected to have ſeen compleated, conſidering how many ſtates are loth to begin, and weary of carrying on, undertakings of ſo vaſt a charge, and ſo difficult to be performed. I was upon the places for two months together, with the commiſſaries that had the overſight of theſe works; and this, during the greateſt heat of ſummer; and yet, thanks to my regimen, the only preſerver of my health, neither the unwholeſome air of the fens, nor the fatigue, did me any injury.

Such as theſe are the employments and diverſions of my old age; which is, bleſſed be God, free from thoſe diſturbances of mind, and infirmities of body, under which

ſo many poor rheumatick and crazy old men, as well as miſerable young men, labour.

If in diſcourſing on ſuch a ſerious ſubject as this, it be allowable to ſpeak of trifles, I might tell you that at the age of fourſcore and three, a ſober life had preſerved me in that ſprightlineſs of thought, and gaiety of humour, as to be able to compoſe a play for the uſe of the ſtage, which was diverting, without ſhocking the audience. Comedy is uſually the product of youth, as tragedy is of old age. The latter, by the gravity of its compoſure, ſuiting to riper years, whilſt the former, by its facetiouſneſs, is more agreeable to thoſe that are young. If antiquity has ſo far commended and admired a Greek poet, for having, in the ſeventy third year of his age, compoſed a tragedy, which is a grave and ſerious poem, why ſhould I be leſs admired, and happy in having compoſed a comedy, which is diverting, at my age? for this I am ſure

of, that though that author was ten years younger than I am, yet he had not more health, nor a briſker genius.

To conclude, as an addition to my happineſs, I ſee myſelf as it were immortalized, and born again by the great number of my deſcendants. I meet with not only two or three when I come home, but eleven grand-children, the eldeſt of which is eighteen, and the youngeſt two years old, all born of the ſame father, and the ſame mother; all healthful, of good parts, and of promiſing hopes. I take a delight in playing with the youngſters; children between three and five years of age, being generally very merry and diverting company. Thoſe who are older, entertain me better: I often make them ſing and play upon muſical inſtruments, and ſometimes I join in conſort with them.

Call you this an infirm and crazy old age, as they pretend, who ſay, that a man is but half alive after he

is ſeventy? they may believe me if they pleaſe, but in reality I would not change my age and life, for the moſt flouriſhing youth, which lays no reſtraint upon its ſenſes, being ſure that it is ſubject to a great many diſtempers, which may occaſion death.

I remember all the follies that I was guilty of in my young days, and am perfectly ſenſible of the danger and imprudence of them. I know with what violence young perſons are carried away by their paſſions, and how much they preſume upon their ſtrength, but would think they had taken a ſure leaſe of their life; they expoſe it raſhly, as if it were chargeable to them, and they run headlong into whatſoever their concupiſcence prompts them to. They muſt gratify their appetites, whatever it coſt them, without perceiving that they feed thoſe ill humours which will render their lives miſerable, and haſten the hour of their death.

Of theſe two, the one is cruel, the other dreadful and inſupportable by all ſenſual men, eſpecially young people, who ſuppoſe they have a better title to life than others; and libertines, who are not ſo blind as to flatter themſelves, that God will permit their ſin to go unpuniſhed.

As for my part, bleſſed be God, I find myſelf freed from thoſe juſt fears which cannot but alarm them, whenever they are capable of reflections. For, in the firſt place, I am certain that I ſhall not fall ſick, ſince I take care, by a regular diet, to ward off infirmities, and then, ſecondly, the time of my death approaching, teaches me to ſubmit quietly to that which is inevitable, and from which no man could ever ſecure himſelf. It is folly to be afraid of that which cannot be avoided; but I hope, whenever the time comes, the merits of Jeſus Chriſt will be available to me; though I am ſenſible that I muſt die, yet I am perſuaded it will be a long time e're I ſhall,

ſince this diſſolution cannot happen, but by the conſumption of the radical moiſture which is exhauſted by age.

The regular life which I lead, has left death this only way of deſtroying me. The humours of my body can do me more injury, than the elementary qualities which prevailed in my nature ever ſince my birth. I am not ſo ſtupid as not to perceive, that having had a beginning, I muſt of neceſſity have an end; but ſince we muſt die, doubtleſs that death is attended with leſs terror, which happens by the natural diſſolution of the parts of which we are compoſed. Nature herſelf having tied the bands of our life, can likewiſe untye them again, without the leaſt pain, and can ſtay longer before it executes that office, than ſickneſſes generally do, which with violence break the bands of our life aſunder, and which can't happen to us, but by foreign cauſes; ſince nothing is more contrary to nature, than that which tends to our deſtruction.

When a man draws near his end, he perceives his ſtrength to abate by degrees: the organs, and all the faculties grow weak; he can no longer walk, and can hardly ſpeak: his judgment and memory fail him: he becomes blind, deaf, and bowed together; in fine, his whole frame is worn out. Bleſſed be God, I am not as yet in that condition. On the contrary, I promiſe myſelf, that my ſoul finds itſelf ſo well in my body, where ſhe meets with nothing but peace, unity and concord, (ſpite of all the different qualities of the humours which compoſe us, and the various inclinations that are produced by the ſenſes) that ſhe will be under no temptation to wiſh a ſpeedy ſeparation, and that it will be a long time before ſhe can be brought to a reſolution.

To conclude, I am aſſured that I ſhall ſtill live ſeveral years in health, and that I ſhall long enjoy the pleaſure of being in the world, which is certainly very comfortable, when a

man knows how to make a right uſe of it. I hope to reap a greater ſatisfaction from hence in the other life, and I ſhall lie under obligations to the virtues of the regimen, to which I am indebted for the victory I have obtained over my paſſions. Nor is there any man but may hope for the ſame happineſs, if he would live as I have done.

A ſober life therefore being ſo neceſſary, its name ſo commendable, the enjoyment of it ſo beneficial, nothing remains after what has been ſaid, but to conjure all men, as they love themſelves, to make the beſt of life, and lay in a ſtock of that which being the moſt precious of all, deſerves to be ſought after, if we have it not, and to be preſerved if we have it.

It is this divine ſobriety, which is always pleaſing to God, and always the friend of nature; ſhe is the daughter of reaſon, the ſiſter of all other virtues, the companion of temperance; always chearful, always

modeſt, always wiſe and regular in her operations. She is the root of health, of induſtry, and of whatever becomes a great ſoul to be employed about. She has the laws of God and nature, both to juſtify and enforce her. When ſhe reigns, repletion, diſorders, evil habits, ſuperfluous humours, fevers, aches, and the fears of death, do not diſreliſh or embitter our pleaſures.

The happineſs of it ſhould invite us, the comelineſs of it ſhould allure us to embrace it. She offers to us the duration of our mortal being: She is the faithful guardian of the life of man, whether he be rich or poor, young or old, of what ſex ſoever. She teaches the rich not to abuſe his wealth, the poor to bear patiently the inconveniences of his ſtate: ſhe teaches the man wiſdom, the woman chaſtity; old men the ſecret of putting off their death, and young men the means of enjoying a long life. She files the ruſt off of our ſenſes, renders the body vigorous, the mind

clear, the ſoul lovely; gives us a happy memory, free motions, and juſt actions. It is by it that the mind being diſengaged from matter enjoys a larger freedom, and the blood runs ſmoothly in our veins, without meeting with any obſtruction in its circulation. It is laſtly by it, that all the powers, both of ſoul and body, are kept up in a perfect union, which nothing but the contrary vice can diſturb.

O ſacred and healthful ſobriety! the powerful ſupport of our nature, the true phyſick of body and mind. How ought men to praiſe thee, and acknowledge thy benefits, ſince thou furniſheſt them with the means of attaining heaven, and of preſerving life and health here upon earth?

But not deſigning to enlarge any farther in commendation of this virtue, I ſhall conclude, keeping within the bounds of ſobriety on this ſubject; not becauſe I have ſaid enough of it, but that I may ſay more of it another time.

CHAP II.

The Method of correcting a bad Conſtitution.

SEVERAL perſons, whoſe weak conſtitutions required great care in the management of it, having been well ſatisfied with what I have written concerning ſobriety, the experience which they have had of the uſefulneſs of my counſels, and the acknowledgments which they have made thereof; encourage me to take up my pen again, that I may convince thoſe, who meet with no inconvenience from intemperance, that they are in the wrong in relying ſo much on the ſtrength of their conſtitution.

Let it be ever ſo well compoſed yet it holds not good but to ſuch an age. Theſe perſons ſeldom arrive to ſixty, but they decay all of a ſudden, and perceive themſelves loaded with a complication of diſtempers. Some are gouty, dropſical, and rheumatical: others are ſubject to cholicks, the ſtone and piles; laſtly, to abundance of diſtempers, which would never have happened to them, if they had been ſo wiſe as to have taken care of themſelves in their youth. If they die infirm at fourſcore years of age, they might have lived in health to an hundred, and ſo have run out the term of life, which nature has left open to all men.

It is to be ſuppoſed that this common parent wiſhes that all her children might live at leaſt a century; and ſince ſome among them have lived to a longer date, why ſhould not others have a right of expecting the ſame advantage?

I do not diſagree, but that we are ſubject to the ſtars which were pre-

dominant at our birth. Their good or bad aſpects, enfeeble or ſtrengthen the ſprings of our life; but man being endued with judgment and reaſon, ought to repair by his prudent conduct, the harm which his planet may have done him; he may prolong his days by the means of a ſober life, to as long a period, as if he had been born very ſtrong and luſty. Prudence prevents and corrects the malignity of the planets; they give us certain inclinations, they carry us out to certain paſſions; but they lay no violence upon us, we may reſiſt them, and in this ſenſe a wiſe man is above the ſtars.

I was born very cholerick and haſty; I flew out into a paſſion for the leaſt trifle; I huffed all mankind, and was ſo intolerable, that a great many perſons of repute avoided my company. I apprehended the injury which I did myſelf; I knew that anger is a real frenzy: that it diſturbs our judgment, that it tranſports us beyond ourſelves, and that

the difference between a paſſionate and a mad man, is only this, that the latter has loſt his reaſon for ever, and the former only deprived of it by fits. A ſober life cured me of this frenzy; by its aſſiſtance I became ſo moderate, and ſo much a maſter of my paſſion, that no body could perceive that it was born with me.

A man may likewiſe with reaſon, and a regular life, correct a bad conſtitution; and notwithſtanding the tenderneſs thereof, may live a long time in good health. I ſhould never have ſeen forty years, had I followed all my inclinations, and yet I am in the eighty ſixth year of my age. If the long and dangerous diſtempers which I had in my youth, had not conſumed a great deal of the radical moiſture, the loſs of which is irreparable, I might have promiſed myſelf to have lived a compleat century. But without flattering myſelf, I find it to be a great matter to have arrived to forty ſix years more than I ever expected, and that in my

old age my conſtitution is ſtill ſo good, that not only my teeth, my voice, my memory, and my heart, are in as good a condition, as ever they were in the briſkeſt days of my youth; but likewiſe my judgment has loſt nothing of its clearneſs and force.

I am of the opinion, that this proceeds from the abridgment I make of my food, proportionably to my growing into years. Experience, which tells us, that infants have a greater appetite, and are more often hungry, than grown men, ought likewiſe to teach us, that in old age we have leſs need of nouriſhment, than in the beginning of our life. A man who is very old, can hardly eat, becauſe he can ſcarce digeſt what he eats; a little ſerves his turn, and the yolk of an egg is a good meal to him. I ſhall be ſatisfied therewith to the end of my days, hoping, by this conduct, neither to die with violence, nor with pain, not queſtioning but that they who would imitate me, will meet with as eaſy an exit, ſince

we are all of the ſame ſpecies, and made up of the ſame materials.

Since nothing then is more advantageous for a man upon earth, than to live long; he is obliged to preſerve his health as far as poſſible, and this he cannot do without ſobriety. It is true, indeed, that there are ſeveral who eat and drink plentifully, and yet live to an hundred years of age. It is by their example that others flatter themſelves with the hopes of attaining to the ſame age, without any occaſion of laying a reſtraint upon themſelves. But they are in the wrong upon theſe two accounts: firſt, becauſe there is hardly one in a thouſand, that has ſo ſtrong a conſtitution. Secondly, becauſe ſuch men do generally end their lives by ſuch diſtempers, as put them into great agonies by dying, which would never happen to thoſe that have the ſame government of themſelves that I have. A man runs the riſque of not attaining to fifty years of age, for not daring to undertake a regular

courſe of life; which is no impoſſible thing, ſince 'tis what I, and ſeveral others have practiſed, and do practiſe. And a man becomes inſenſibly a murderer of himſelf; becauſe he cannot be perſuaded, that notwithſtanding the falſe charms of a voluptuous life, a wiſe man ought not to look upon it as any hardſhip, to put in practice what his reaſon adviſes him.

Reaſon, if we hearken to it, will tell us, that a good regimen is neceſſary for the prolonging of our days; and that it conſiſts in two things: firſt, in taking care of the quality; and, ſecondly, of the quantity; ſo as to eat and drink nothing that offends the ſtomach, nor any more than what we can eaſily digeſt. Our experience ought to be our guide in theſe two principles, when we are arrived to forty, fifty or threeſcore years of age. He who puts in practice that knowledge which he has of what is good for him, and goes on in a frugal way of living, keeps the hu-

mours in a juſt temperature, and prevents them from being altered; though he ſuffer heat and cold, tho' he be fatigued, though his ſleep be broke; provided there be no exceſs in any of them. This being ſo; what an obligation does a man lie under of living ſoberly? and ought he not to free himſelf from the fears of ſinking under the leaſt intemperature of the air, and under the leaſt fatigue, which make us ſick upon every ſlight occaſion?

'Tis true, indeed, the moſt ſober may ſometimes be indiſpoſed, when they are unavoidably oblig'd to tranſgreſs the rules which they have been uſed to obſerve: but then, they are certain, that their indiſpoſition will not laſt above two or three days at moſt; nor can they fall into a fever. Wearineſs and faintneſs are eaſily remedied by reſt and good diet. The malignancy of the ſtars cannot put the malignant humours in a ferment, in bodies which have them not: tho' diſtempers which proceed from in-

temperance, have an internal cauſe, and may be dangerous; thoſe which are derived from the influences of the planets, affect us only externally, and cannot produce any great diſorders.

There are ſome who feed high, and maintain, whatſoever they eat is ſo little a diſturbance to them, that they cannot perceive in what part of their body their ſtomach lies; But I aver, that they do not ſpeak as they think; nor is it natural. It is impoſſible, that any created being ſhould be of ſo perfect a compoſition, as that neither heat or cold, dry nor moiſt, ſhould have any influence over it; and that the variety of food which they make uſe of, of different qualities, ſhould be equally agreeable to them. Thoſe men cannot but acknowledge, that they are ſometimes out of order: if it is not owing to a ſenſible indigeſtion, yet they are troubled with head-achs, want of ſleep, and fevers; of which they are cured by a diet, and taking ſuch me-

dicines as are proper for evacuation. It is therefore certain, that their diſtempers proceed from repletion, or from their having eat or drank ſomething which did not agree with their ſtomachs.

Moſt old people excuſe their high feeding, by ſaying, that it is neceſſary for them to eat a great deal, to keep up their natural heat, which diminiſhes proportionably as they grow in years; and to create an appetite, it is requiſite to find out proper ſauces, and to eat whatever they have a fancy for; and that without thus humouring their palates, they ſhould be ſoon in their graves. To this I reply, that nature, for the preſervation of a man in years, has ſo compoſed him, that he may live with a little food; that his ſtomach cannot digeſt a great quantity; and that he has no need of being afraid of dying for want of eating, ſince when he is ſick, he is forced to have recourſe to a regular ſort of diet, which is the firſt

and main thing preſcribed him by his phyſicians. Laſtly, that if this remedy is of ſuch efficacy, as to ſnatch us out of the arms of death, it is a miſtake to ſuppoſe, that a man may not, by eating a little more than he does when he is ſick, live a long time without ever being ſick.

Others had rather be diſturb'd twice or thrice a year with the gout, the Sciatica, and other epidemical diſtempers, than to be always put to the torment and mortification of laying a reſtraint upon their appetites; being ſure, that when they are indiſpoſed, a regular diet will be an infallible remedy and cure. But let them be informed by me, that as they grow up in years, their natural heat abates: that a regular diet, deſpiſed as a precaution, and only look'd upon as phyſick, cannot always have the ſame effect nor force to draw off the crudities, and repair the diſorders, which are cauſed by repletion; and laſtly, that

they run the hazard of being cheated, by their hope and their intemperance.

Others ſay, that it is more eligible to feed high, and enjoy themſelves, tho' a man lives the leſs while. It is no ſurprizing matter, that fools and madmen ſhould contemn and deſpiſe life; the world would be no loſer, whenever they go out of it: but it is a conſiderable loſs, when wiſe, virtuous, and holy men drop into the grave. If one of them were a biſhop, he might have been an archbiſhop, in growing older: if he were in ſome conſiderable poſt in the ſtate, he might have arrived to the higheſt: if he were learned, or excelled in any art, he would have been more excellent, and done more honour to his country and himſelf.

Others there are, who perceiving themſelves to grow old, tho' their ſtomach becomes leſs capable of digeſting well every day than other, yet will not, upon that account, abate any thing of their diet. They

only abridge themſelves in the number of their meals; and becauſe they find two or three times a day is troubleſome, they think their health is ſufficiently provided for, by making only one meal; that ſo the time between one repaſt and another, may (as they ſay) facilitate the digeſtion of thoſe aliments, which they might have taken at twice: for this reaſon they eat at this one meal ſo much, that their ſtomach is overcharged, and out of order, and converts the ſuperfluities of its nouriſhment into bad humours, which engender diſeaſes and death. I never knew a man that lived long by this conduct. Theſe men would doubtleſs have prolonged their days, had they abridged the quantity of their ordinary food, proportionably as they grew in years, and had they eaten a great deal leſs, and a little oftner.

Some again are of opinion, that ſobriety may indeed preſerve a man in health, but does not prolong his

life: to this we ſay, that there have been perſons in paſt ages, who have prolonged their lives by this means; and ſome there are at preſent, who ſtill do: it ſhortens our days, as the infirmities contracted by repletion do. A man of an ordinary reach may perceive, that, if he deſires to live long, it is better to be well than ſick; and that, conſequently, temperance contributes more to a long life, than an exceſſive feeding.

Whatſoever the ſenſualiſt may ſay, temperance is of infinite benefit to mankind: to it he owes his preſervation: it baniſhes from his mind the diſmal apprehenſion of dying: it is by its means that he becomes wiſe, and arrives to an age, wherein reaſon and experience furniſh him with aſſiſtance, to free himſelf from the tyranny of his paſſions, which have lorded it over him for almoſt the whole courſe of his life. O ſacred and beneficent temperance! how much am I obliged to thee, for ſeeing the time which has ſo many

charms, when one follows thy maxims, and obſerves thoſe rules which thou doſt preſcribe? when I deny'd my ſenſes nothing, I did not taſte ſuch pure and refin'd pleaſures as I now enjoy. They were then ſo troubleſome, and mixed with pains, that even in the height of thoſe enjoyments, the bitterneſs exceeded the ſweetneſs of them.

O happy ſtate of life! which, beſides other bleſſings with which thou favoureſt an old man, doſt preſerve his ſtomach in ſo perfect a tone, as to make him reliſh a piece of dry bread, better than the voluptuous do all their dainty morſels, and beſt ſeaſon'd diſhes. The appetite which thou giveſt us for bread, is juſt and reaſonable; ſince it is the moſt proper food for mankind, when attended with a deſire of eating. A ſober life is never without ſuch an appetite. So that by eating a little, my ſtomach is often craving after the manna; which I ſometimes reliſh with ſo much pleaſure, that I ſhould

think I treſpaſs upon the duty of temperance, did I not know that one muſt eat it to ſupport life; and that one cannot make uſe of a plainer, and a more natural diet.

My ſpirits are not injured by what I eat; they are only revived and ſupported by it. I always find myſelf in an even temper, always chearful; and more ſo after, than before meals. I uſe myſelf, preſently upon riſing from the table, to write or ſtudy, and never find, that this application of mind, after eating, is prejudicial to me: for I am equally capable at all times of doing it, and never perceive myſelf drowzy, as a great many people do. The reaſon of this is, becauſe the little I eat is not ſufficient to ſend up the fumes from the ſtomach to the head, which fill the brain, and render it uncapable of performing its functions.

What I eat, is as follows; viz. bread, ſoop, new-laid eggs, veal, kid, mutton, partridges, pullets, and pi-

geons. Among the ſea-fiſh, I chuſe goldenis, and of the river-fiſh, the pike. All theſe aliments are proper for old men; who, if they be 'wiſe 'for themſelves,' would be contented with theſe, and ſeek for no other.

A poor old man, who has not wherewith to purchaſe all theſe, ſhould be ſatisfied with bread, broth and eggs; and there is no man, how poor ſoever he be, that can ſtand in want of this food, unleſs they be downright beggars, reduced to live upon alms, of whom I do not pretend to ſay any thing. The reaſon of their being ſo miſerable in their old age, is becauſe they were idle and lazy when they were young; it were better for them to die than to live, for they are a burthen to the world. But this we ſay, that another man in low circumſtances, who has only bread, broth and eggs, ought not to eat much of them at a time, but ſo to regulate himſelf, with reſpect to the quantity of his diet, as that he may not die but by

a mere diſſolution. For it is not to be ſuppoſed that a ſtab, or the like, is the only violent death; fevers, and a great many other diſtempers, of which one dies in bed, are to be counted as ſuch, being cauſed by thoſe humours, againſt which nature would not ſtruggle, if they were natural.

What difference then is there, between a ſober and an intemperate life? the one ſhortens, the other prolongs our days, and makes us enjoy a perfect health. How many of my relations and friends has intemperance carried off, who would have been ſtill alive, had they followed my counſel? but it has not been able to deſtroy me, as it has ſo many others; and becauſe I had the power of reſiſting its charms, I am ſtill in the land of the living, and am arrived to a good old age.

If I had not abandoned thee, thou infamous ſource of corruption, I ſhould never have had the pleaſure of ſeeing eleven of my grand-chil-

dren, all of them witty and promiſing; nor beheld the ornaments which I have made to my houſes and gardens. But thou, O cruel intemperance! doſt often put an end to the days of thy ſlaves, before they could have finiſhed what they begun. They dare not undertake any thing that requires time to compleat it; and ſhould they be ſo happy, as to ſee their works brought to perfection, yet they do not long enjoy the fruit of their labours. But to ſhew what thou really art, viz. a deadly poiſon, the moſt dangerous enemy of mankind, and wiſhing that all men may conceive a juſt abhorrence for thee, I promiſe myſelf that my eleven grand-children will declare war againſt thee, and following my example, will convince all mankind of the abuſe of thy cravings, and of the uſefulneſs of a regular courſe of life.

I cannot underſtand how it comes to paſs that ſo many people, otherwiſe prudent and rational, cannot

reſolve upon laying a reſtraint upon their inſatiable appetites, at fifty or threeſcore years of age, or at leaſt when they begin to feel the infirmities of old age coming upon them. They might rid themſelves of them by a ſtrict diet, and become incurable, becauſe they will not obſerve a regimen. I do not wonder ſo much that young people are ſo hardly brought to ſuch a reſolution: they are not capable enough of reflecting, and their judgment is not ſolid enough to reſiſt the charms of ſenſe: but at fifty, a man ought to be governed by his reaſon; which would convince us, if we would hearken to it, that to gratify all our appetites, without any rule or meaſure, is the way to become infirm, and to die young. Nor does the pleaſure of taſte laſt long; it hardly begins, but 'tis gone and paſt: the more one eats, the more one may; and the diſtempers which it brings along with it, laſts us to our graves. Now ſhould not a ſober man be

very well ſatisfied, when he is at table, upon the aſſurance, that as often as he riſes from it, what he eats will do him no harm?

I was willing to add this ſupplement to my treatiſe; it is ſhort, and runs upon other arguments: the reaſon of my caſting them into two chapters, is becauſe the reader will be better pleaſed to peruſe them at twice, than at once. I wiſh all the world were ſo curious as to peruſe both, and be the better for them.

CHAP. III.

A letter to ſignior Barbaro, patriarch of Aquilea; concerning the method of enjoying a compleat happineſs in old age.

IT muſt needs be owned, that the mind of man is one of the greateſt works of God, and that it is the maſter-piece of the divine architect. Is it not ſomething ſurprizing, to be able by writing to keep up a correſpondence with ones friends at a diſtance? and is not our nature of a wonderful compoſition, which affords us the means of ſeeing one another with the eyes of our imagination, as I, ſir, behold you at preſent? it is after this manner that I

ſhall enter into diſcourſe with you, and relate to you ſeveral pleaſing and profitable things.

It is true, indeed, that what I have to tell you is no news, with reſpect to the ſubject matter thereof, but I never told it you at the age of ninety one years. It is ſomewhat aſtoniſhing that I am able to tell you, that my health and ſtrength are in ſo good a plight, that inſtead of diminiſhing with my age, they ſeem to increaſe as I grow old. All mine acquaintance are ſurprized at it; and I, who know to what I am indebted for this happineſs, do every where declare the cauſe of it. I endeavour all I can to convince all mankind, that a man may enjoy a compleat happineſs in this world, after the age of fourſcore, and this cannot be attained without continence and ſobriety, which are two virtues precious in the eyes of God, becauſe they are enemies to our ſenſual appetites, and friends to our preſervation.

Be pleaſed then, ſir, to know, that for ſome days paſt, ſeveral doctors of our univerſity, as well phyſicians as philoſophers, came to be informed by me, of the method I took in my diet, having underſtood that I was ſtill healthful and ſtrong, that I had my ſenſes perfect, that my memory, my heart, my judgment, the tone of my voice, and my teeth, were all as ſound as in my youth; that I wrote ſeven or eight hours a day with my hand, and ſpent the reſt of the day in walking out a-foot, and in taking all the innocent pleaſures that are allowed to a virtuous man; even muſick itſelf, in which I bear my part.

Ah, ſir! how ſweet a voice would you perceive mine to be, were you to hear me like another David, chant forth the praiſes of God to the ſound of my lyre? you would certainly be ſurprized and charmed with the harmony which I make. Thoſe gentlemen particularly admired, with what eaſineſs I could write upon

ſubjects which required a great and earneſt application of mind, and which were ſo far from fatiguing, that they diverted me. You need not queſtion, but that taking up my pen to have the honour of entertaining you to day, the pleaſure which I conceive in ſuch an employment, is more pleaſing and delightful to me, than thoſe which I am us'd to take.

Thoſe doctors told me, that I ought not to be look'd upon as an old man, ſince all my works and employments were ſuch as were proper for a youth, and did by no means reſemble the works of men advanced in years; who are capable of doing nothing after fourſcore, who are loaded with infirmities and diſtempers, who are perpetually languiſhing, and in pain.

That if there be any of them who are leſs infirm, yet their ſenſes are decayed; their ſight and hearing fails them, their legs tremble, and their hands ſhake, they can no long-

er walk, nor are they capable of doing any thing: and ſhould there chance to be one that is free from thoſe diſaſters, his memory decreaſes, his ſpirits ſink, and his heart fails him; in ſhort, he does not enjoy a life ſo perfectly as I do. What they wondered at moſt, was a thing that is really ſurprizing. It is this, that by an invincible ſort of antipathy, I can't drink any wine whatſoever, during the months of July and Auguſt, every year. I have ſo great an averſion to it, that I ſhould certainly die, did I but force myſelf to drink any; for neither my ſtomach, nor my palate can bear it; ſo that wine being as it were mother's-milk to old men, it ſeems as if I could not poſſibly preſerve my life without that nouriſhment. My ſtomach then being deprived of a help ſo uſeful and proper for the maintaining the heat thereof, I could eat but very little, which about the middle of Auguſt, brought me ſo low and weak, that jelly-broths and cordials could not

keep up my ſpirits. However, this weakneſs is not attended with any pain, or pernicious accident. Our doctors were of opinion, that if the new wine, which reſtores me perfectly to my health, in the beginning of September, were not made at that time, I could never eſcape death. They were no leſs ſurprized to ſee, that in three or four days time, new wine will reſtore to me that ſtrength which I had loſt by drinking of the old; a thing of which they were witneſſes theſe days paſt, when they ſaw me in thoſe two different circumſtances, without which they could never have believed it.

Several phyſicians were pleaſed to prognoſticate to me, ten years ago, that it was impoſſible for me to hold out two or three years longer with this pernicious antipathy: however, I ſtill find myſelf leſs weak than ever, and am ſtronger this year than any that went before. This ſort of miracle, and the many favours which I received from God, obliged them to

tell me, that I brought along with me at my birth, an extraordinary and ſpecial gift of nature; and for the proof of their opinion they employ'd all their rhetorick, and made ſeveral elegant ſpeeches upon that head. It muſt be acknowledg'd, my lord, that eloquence has a great deal of force upon the mind of man, ſince it often perſuades him to believe that which never was, and never could be. I was very much pleaſed to hear them diſcourſe; and could it be helped, ſince they were men of parts who harangued at that rate? but that which delighted me moſt, was to reflect, that age and experience may render a man wiſer than all the colleges in the world can. Theſe are two infallible means of acquiring a clear ſight into things; and it was in truth by their help, that I knew the error of that notion. To undeceive thoſe gentlemen, and at the ſame time to inſtruct them better, I replied, that their way of arguing was wrong: that the favour I re-

ceived was no ſpecial, but a general and univerſal one: that there was no man alive, but what may have received it as well as myſelf: that I was but a man as well as others: that we have all, beſides our exiſtence, judgment, a mind and reaſon: that we are all born with theſe ſame faculties of the ſoul; becauſe God was pleaſed that we ſhould all of us have thoſe advantages above the other creatures, who have nothing in common with us, but the uſe of their ſenſes: that the Creator has beſtowed upon us this reaſon, and this judgment, to preſerve our lives, ſo that this grace proceeds immediately from God, and not from nature, or the ſtars: that man, when he is young, being more ſubject to his ſenſe, than to his reaſon, gives himſelf up wholly to his pleaſures; and that when he is arrived to forty or fifty years of age, he ought to know that he is in the midſt of his life, thanks to the goodneſs of his conſtitution, which has carried him ſo far: but that when

he is arrived to this period, he goes down the hill apace to meet his death, of which the infirmities of old age are the forerunners: that old age is as different from youth, as a regular life is oppoſite to intemperance: that 'tis neceſſary for him at that age, to change his courſe of life, eſpecially with reſpect to the quantity and the quality of his diet, becauſe 'tis on that the health and length of our days do radically depend. That laſtly, if the former part of our lives were altogether ſenſual, then the latter ought to be rational and regular; order being neceſſary for the preſervation of all things, eſpecially the life of man, as may be perceived by thoſe inconveniences that are cauſed by exceſs, and by the healthfulneſs of thoſe that obſerve a ſtrict regimen. In truth, my lord, 'tis impoſſible for them who will always gratify their taſte, and their appetite, not to break their conſtitution; and that I might not break mine, when I was arrived to maturity, I entirely devot-

ed myſelf to a ſober life. It is true, it was not without ſome reluctancy that I entered upon the reſolution and abandoned my profuſe way of living. I began with praying to God, that he would grant me the gift of temperance; and was fully perſuaded, that how difficult ſoever any undertaking be, which a man ſets about, he will attain his end, if he has but reſolution enough to conquer the obſtacles to his deſign. By this means I rooted out my evil habits, and contracted good ones; ſo that I uſed myſelf to a courſe of life, which was by ſo much the more ſevere and auſtere, by how much the more my conſtitution was become very weak when I began it. In ſhort, my lord, when they had heard my reaſons, they were forced to ſubmit to them.

The youngeſt among them told me, that he agreed that this favour might be univerſal to all men, but that it was very rarely efficacious, and that I muſt needs have a more eſpecial and victorious grace, to get

above the delights and cuſtoms of an eaſy life, and embrace one that was quite contrary to it: that he did not look upon it to be impoſſible, ſince my practice convinced him of the contrary, but however it ſeemed to him to be very difficult.

I replied to him, that it was a ſhame to relinquiſh a good undertaking upon the account of the difficulties that might attend it, and that the more we met with, the more glory ſhould we acquire: that 'tis the will of the Creator, that every one ſhould attain to a long life, to which he has appointed man, becauſe in his old age, he might be freed from the bitter fruits that were produced by ſenſe, and might enjoy the good effects of his reaſon; that when he ſhakes hands with his vices, he is no longer a ſlave to the devil, and finds himſelf in a better condition of providing for the ſalvation of his ſoul: that God, whoſe goodneſs is infinite, has ordained that the man who comes to the end of his race, ſhould

end his life without any diſtemper, and by a pure diſſolution, which only ought to be called a natural death, all others being violent, and brought upon men by repletion and exceſs. That, laſtly, God is willing that man ſhould paſs by ſo ſweet and eaſy a death, to a life of immortality and glory, which I expect. I hope (ſaid I to him) to die ſinging the praiſes of my Creator. The ſad reflection, that we muſt one day ceaſe to live, is no diſturbance to me, though I eaſily perceive that at my age, that fatal day can't be far from me; that as certainly as I was born ſo I muſt die, and that many thouſands of younger perſons than myſelf, are departed this life before me. Nor am I afraid of the terrors of hell, becauſe I am a Chriſtian, and put my truſt in the mercy and merits of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt: laſtly, I hope that ſo pleaſant a life as mine, will be followed by as happy a death.

To this the young gentleman replied not a word, only that he was

reſolved to lead a ſober life, that he might live and die as happily as I hoped to do; and that though hitherto he had wiſhed to be young a long time, yet now he deſired to be quickly old, that he might enjoy the pleaſures of ſuch an admirable age.

The deſire I had of giving you, my lord, a long entertainment, as being one with whom I could never be weary, has inclined me to write this long letter to you, and to add one word more before I conclude.

Some ſenſual perſons give out, that I have troubled myſelf to no purpoſe, in compoſing a treatiſe concerning ſobriety, and that I have loſt my time in endeavouring to perſuade men to the practice of that which is impoſſible: that my advices will prove as uſeleſs as the laws which Plato would have eſtabliſhed in his commonwealth, the execution of which was ſo difficult, that he could never prevail upon any man to receive them; and that what I have written upon this ſubject, will

meet with no better a ſucceſs. I find this compariſon is by no means juſt, ſince I practiſed what I teach a great many years before I wrote upon it; that I would never have put pen to paper, had I not known, by my own experience, that this practice was not impoſſible; that it is likewiſe very uſeful, and very prudent; and this was the motive which prevailed upon me to publiſh it. In a word, I have been the occaſion of a great many perſons practiſing it, who find themſelves the better for ſo doing, ſo that the laws of Plato have no reſemblance to the advices which I give. But ſuch perſons who deny themſelves nothing, that they may gratify their ſenſe, do not care to give me their approbation. However, I pity theſe men, though they deſerve for their intemperance, to be tormented in their old days with a complication of diſtempers, and to be the victims of their paſſions a whole eternity. I am, &c.

CHAP. IV.

Of the birth and death of man.

THAT I may not be deficient in that duty of charity, which all men owe to one another, or loſe one moment of that pleaſure which the enjoyment of life affords; I will again write, to inform thoſe who do not know me, of what they who are acquainted with me, have known and ſeen. What I am going to ſay, will be looked upon as impoſſible, or incredible; but, at the ſame time, nothing is more certain; it being what a great many know, and what is worthy to be admired by all poſterity. I am now ninety five years of age, and find myſelf as healthful and briſk, and as airy, as if I were but twenty five years old.

What ingratitude ſhould I be guilty of, did I not return thanks to the Divine goodneſs, for all his mercies reached out unto me? moſt of your old men have ſcarce arrived to ſixty, but they find themſelves loaded with infirmities: they are melancholy, unhealthful; always full of the frightful apprehenſions of dying: they tremble day and night, for fear of being within one foot of their graves; and are ſo ſtrongly poſſeſſed with the fancy of it, that it is a hard matter to divert them but for a moment from that doleful thought. Bleſſed be God, I am free from their ills and terrors. It is my opinion, that I ought not as yet to abandon myſelf to that vain fear: this I will make appear by the ſequel; and will alſo evince, how certain I am of living an hundred years. But, that I may obſerve a method in the ſubject I am treating of, I will begin with the birth of man, and end with his death.

I ſay then, that ſome bodies are born with ſo bad a conſtitution, that they live but few days, or months. Whether this proceeds from the bad conſtitutions of the parents, or from the influences of the ſtars, or from a weakneſs of nature, which derives this defect from ſome foreign cauſe, is hard to determine: for it is not likely, that nature, as ſhe is the common parent of all mankind, ſhould be guilty of over-fondneſs to ſome of her children, and of cruelty towards others.

Since we are not able to diſcover the true reaſon from whence the ſhortneſs of our lives proceeds, it is in vain to enquire into the cauſe of it. It is enough to know, that there are bodies which die almoſt as ſoon as they are born.

Others are born well ſhaped and healthful, but of a tender make; and ſome of theſe live ten, twenty, thirty, or forty years, without being able to attain to that period which is called old age.

Others there are, who bring along with them a ſtrong conſtitution into the world, and they indeed get to be old: but then they are ſo decrepit and unhealthful, (as hath been already obſerv'd) bringing upon themſelves all the diſtempers they labour under, becauſe they truſted too much to the ſtrength of their conſtitution. They are unwilling to alter their courſe of life, and make no difference between their being old and young; as if they were to be as vigorous at fourſcore, as in the flower of their days. By this means, they never correct their conduct, nor make any reflection that they are old, that their conſtitution decays, that their ſtomach loſes every day ſomething of its natural heat; and for that reaſon, they ought to be more careful both of the quality and quantity of what they eat and drink. They are of opinion, that a man's ſtrength impairing as he grows into years, he ought to repair and ſupport it by a

greater quantity of food: they fancy, that to eat a great deal, preſerves their lives; but therein they are miſtaken: for the natural heat beginning to decay, they overcharge it with too much food; and prudence requires, that a man ſhould proportion his diet to his digeſtive faculties. This is certain, that the peccant humours proceed only from an imperfect digeſtion; and there is but a little good chyle made, when the ſtomach is charged with freſh aliments, before it has thrown off the former meal's meat into the inteſtines. It cannot then be urged too often, that when the natural heat begins to decay, it is neceſſary for the preſervation of health, to abate the quantity of what one eats and drinks every day; nature requiring but very little for the ſupport of the life of man, eſpecially that of an old man.

However, inſtead of taking this courſe, moſt old people continue to live as they did formerly. If they

had ſtinted themſelves in time, they would at leaſt have arrived to my years and enjoyed as long a life as myſelf, ſince they brought into the world a ſtrong conſtitution. They might have lived ſo long at leaſt, I ſay; for they might have arrived to ſixſcore, as a great many others who lived ſoberly have done, whom we have known ourſelves, or have heard of by tradition; provided always, that they had as happy a conſtitution as thoſe people. Had I been as well made, I would not queſtion but I might prolong my days to that date; but becauſe I was born with a tender conſtitution, I cannot hope to live above a century: and even they who are of no ſtronger a make than myſelf, may, by living ſoberly, as I do, eaſily attain to the ſame period.

Nothing ſeems more delightful than this certainty of a long life; whilſt the reſt of mankind, who obſerve not the rules of ſobriety, are not ſure of ſeeing the next day.

This expectation of a long life, is founded on ſuch natural conſequences as can never fail. It is next to impoſſible, that he who leads a regular and ſober life, ſhould fall ſick, or die a natural death, before the time that nature has preſcribed: I ſay, he cannot die before that time: becauſe a ſober life prevents that corruption which feeds our diſtempers, which cannot be produced without a cauſe; and if there is no bad one reigning, there can be no fatal effect, or violent death.

There is no queſtion to be made, but that a regular life puts at diſtance the ſad hour of our death; ſince it is able to keep the humours in an exact temperature: whereas, on the contrary, gluttony and drunkenneſs diſturbs, heats, and puts them into a ferment; which is the origin of catarrhs, fevers, and almoſt all the accidents which hurry us to our graves.

However, though ſobriety, which preſerves us from abundance of diſ-

aſters, may repair what exceſs has impaired, yet it muſt not be ſuppoſed that it will make a man immortal. It is impoſſible, but that time, which effaces all things, ſhould likewiſe deſtroy the moſt curious workmanſhip of nature. That which had a beginning, muſt needs have an end; but man ought to end his days by a natural death, that is, without any pain; as they will ſee me dye, when the radical moiſture ſhall be quite exhauſted.

I find this principle of life ſtill ſo perfect in me, that I promiſe myſelf ſtill to be at ſome diſtance from my laſt day; and I fancy I am not miſtaken, becauſe I am healthful and briſk, reliſh all I eat, ſleep quietly, and, in a word, none of my ſenſes fail me. I have ſtill a lively fancy, a happy memory, a ſound judgment, a ſtrong heart; and my voice is more tuneable than ever, (though the firſt organ that fails) ſo that I can chant forth my office every morning, without any prejudice to

my lungs, and more eaſily than I could in my youth.

All theſe are infallible ſigns, that I have a great while ſtill to live; but that my life ſhall end, whenever it pleaſe God. How glorious will it then be, having been then attended with all the happineſs this world can afford, ſince age has freed me from the ſlavery of my paſſions? a prudent and regular old age conquers and eradicates them; prevents them from bringing forth any envenomed fruits, and changes all the ill thoughts which youth inſpires into thoſe that are good.

Being no longer a ſlave to ſenſe, I am not troubled with the thoughts that my ſoul ſhall one day be ſeparated from the body. I am no longer diſturbed with anxious fears and racking cares, nor vex'd at the loſs of that which is not really mine. The death of my friends and relations, occaſions no other grief in me, than that of the firſt movement of

nature, which cannot be avoided, but is of no long continuance.

I am ſtill leſs moved at the loſs of any temporal good, ſo afflictive to a great many perſons. This is only the happineſs of thoſe that grow old by ſobriety, and not of thoſe perſons who by virtue of a ſtrong conſtitution, arrive to ſuch an age, notwithſtanding their exceſſes. The one enjoys a foretaſte of heaven, even in this world, whilſt the others cannot reliſh any pleaſure, without a great deal of trouble. Who would not think himſelf happy at my age, never to be ſenſible of the leaſt inconvenience? a happineſs which ſeldom attends the moſt flouriſhing youth. There are none of them but what are ſubject to a thouſand diſorders, which I know nothing of: on the contrary, I enjoy a thouſand pleaſures, which are as pure as they are calm.

The firſt of theſe, is to be ſerviceable to my country; and how does this pleaſure innocently pleaſe my

vanity! when I reflect how I have furniſhed my countrymen with uſeful means, both of fortifying their city, and their port: that theſe works will ſubſiſt for many ages, that they will conduce to the making of Venice a famous republick, a rich and matchleſs city, and ſerve to eternize its fair title of being queen of the ſea.

I have likewiſe the ſatisfaction of having afforded to her inhabitants the means of obtaining always a plenty of all things, neceſſary for life, by manuring untilled lands, draining the marſhes, by laying under water and fatning the fields which were barren by reaſon of the dryneſs of the ſoil, which would otherwiſe have been a work of time.

In ſhort I have rendred the city wherein I was born, ſtronger, richer, and more beautiful than ever, as alſo the air more wholeſome; all which is to my credit, and nothing hinders me from enjoying the glory which is due unto me.

My misfortunes having robbed me of a conſiderable eſtate, whilſt I was young, I knew how to make amends for that loſs by my care; ſo that without the leaſt wrong done to any perſon, and without any other trouble, than that of giving forth the orders that were neceſſary, I have doubled my income, and ſhall leave to my grand-children twice the eſtate that I had by inheritance from my anceſtors.

One ſatisfaction which pleaſes me more than all the reſt, is, that what I have written concerning ſobriety, is of great uſe to many who loudly proclaim how highly they are obliged to me for that work: ſeveral of them having ſent me word from foreign parts, that, under God, they have been indebted to me for their lives.

I have likewiſe another ſatisfaction, the deprivation of which would very much diſturb me; which is, that I write and draw with my hand, all that is proper for my buildings,

and for the conduct of my domeſtick affairs.

I likewiſe frequently converſe with men of learning, from whom I daily receive new notices. And it is a wonder that, at my age, I ſhould have ſo quick parts, as to learn and comprehend the moſt refined and difficult of ſciences.

But that which makes me look upon myſelf as one of the happieſt of men, is, that I in ſome meaſure enjoy two ſorts of lives; the one terreſtrial, with reſpect to the actions of my body; and the other divine and celeſtial, by the pleaſures of the mind; which are attended with a great many charms, when founded on reaſonable objects, and a moral aſſurance of the infinite good things which the Divine bounty prepares for us.

I enjoy then perfectly, the pleaſures of this mortal life. Thanks to ſobriety, which is extremely grateful to God, as being the guardian of virtue, and an irreconcileable

enemy to vice; and by way of foretaſte, I enjoy eternal life, by contemplating ſo often on the happineſs thereof, that I can hardly think upon any thing elſe. I look upon death as the neceſſary paſſage to heaven, and am ſo far charmed with the glorious elevation to which I think my ſoul is deſigned, that I can no longer ſtoop to thoſe trifles, which charm and infatuate the greateſt part of mankind. The deprivation of thoſe pleaſures to which I was moſt addicted, gives me no diſquiet; on the contrary, the loſs of them raiſes my joy, ſince it is to be the beginning of a life incomparably more happy.

Who then would be troubled, if he were in my place? however, there is not a man, but may hope for the like happineſs, if he would live as I do. For in ſhort, I am neither ſaint nor angel, but only a man, the ſervant of God, to whom a ſober and regular life is ſo grateful, that

even in this world, he rewards thoſe who practiſe it.

If all they who retire into monaſteries, to lead there a penitent life, a life of prayer and contemplation, would to all their virtues, add the prudence of abridging themſelves in their diet, they would become more deſerving, and more venerable.

They would be looked upon as ſaints, by perſevering in their auſterities, and eſteemed as thoſe old patriarchs, and ancient hermits, who obſerved a conſtant ſobriety, and liv'd ſo long a time. They might very probably obtain, at the age of ſixſcore, ſo much grace, as to be able to work miracles, which they could not do, for want of ſuch a perfection, to which they could not arrive before that time. And beſides this privilege, which is almoſt an infallible mark of predeſtination, they would be in conſtant health, which is as rarely to met with in the old age of the moſt pious monks, as in

that of the greateſt part of the wiſeſt worldlings.

Several of thoſe monks fancy, that God does on purpoſe annex infirmities to old age, to ſerve inſtead of penance impoſed for the ſins committed in their youth. But therein, as I think, they are very much miſtaken. For I cannot imagine how God, who loves mankind, can be delighted in their ſufferings. It is the devil and ſin which brings all the evils we ſuffer, upon our heads, and not God, who is our Father and Creator. He deſires that mankind ſhould be happy, both in this, and the other world: his commands tend to no other purpoſe; and temperance would not be a virtue, if the benefit it does us by preſerving us from diſtempers, were repugnant to the deſigns of God in our old age.

In ſhort, if all the truly pious were ſober, Chriſtendom would be as full of ſaints, as in the primitive times, nay, they would be more

numerous, becauſe the number of Chriſtians is increaſed ſince that time. How many venerable doctors might edify others by their wholeſome preachings and good examples? how many ſinners might receive benefit by their interceſſions? How many bleſſings might they ſhower upon the earth? theſe monks, in obſerving the maxims which I profeſs, need not fear acting contrary to thoſe of their rule.

There is not one that forbids them the uſe of bread, wine and eggs; ſome alſo permit them to eat fleſh. Beſides theſe things, they make uſe of ſallads, pulſe, fruit, cakes, which are prejudicial to ſome ſtomachs. Becauſe theſe meſſes are offered to them in the refectory, they may perhaps be afraid of tranſgreſſing their rule, if they ſhould abſtain from them. However, they would have done better, if, thirty years ago, they had abſtained from that diet, and contented themſelves with bread, wine, broths and eggs,

which are the beſt food a tender body can take. Would not this be better than the nouriſhment of the ancient fathers in the deſart, who drank nothing but fair water, did eat only wild fruit, herbs, and raw roots, yet lived a long time without infirmities? our Anchorets would likewiſe find a more eaſy way to heaven, than thoſe of Thebais.

I will conclude all with ſaying, that ſince extreme old age may be ſo uſeful and pleaſant to men, I ſhould have failed in point of charity, had I not taken care to inform them, by what methods they might prolong their days. I have had no other motive in writing upon this ſubject, than that of engaging them to practiſe all their lives, a virtue which would bring them, like me, to a happy old age, in which I will not ceaſe to cry, live, live long, to the end you may ſerve God, and be fit for the glory which he prepares for his elect.

CHAP. V.

Being a letter from a nun of Padua, the grand-daughter of Lewis Cornaro.

LEWIS Cornaro was, by the ill conduct of ſome of his relations, deprived of the dignity of a noble Venetian, of which he was poſſeſſed, and which he deſerved for his virtues, and by his birth. He was not baniſhed from his country, but was free to remain in Venice, if he pleaſed; but ſeeing himſelf excluded from all the publick employments of the republick, he retired to Padua, where he took up his reſidence.

He married at Udine, a city of Friuli; his wife's name was Veronica, of the family of the Spilen-

bergs. She was a long time barren, and as he ardently wiſhed for children, he neglected nothing which might give him that ſatisfaction. At laſt, after many vows, prayers and remedies, his wife became pregnant, and was delivered of a daughter, who was named Clara, becauſe of the devotion which each of them had for St. Francis.

This was an only daughter, and was married to John Cornaro, ſon of Fantin, of the family of that name, which was diſtinguiſhed by the ſirname of Cornaro del Epiſcopia. It was a very powerful family, before the loſs which Chriſtendom ſuffered, by loſing the kingdom of Cyprus, where that family had a conſiderable eſtate.

Clara had eleven children, eight ſons, and three daughters. Lewis Cornaro had alſo the pleaſure to ſee himſelf, as it were, revived by miracle, in a great number of ſucceſſors; for though he was very ancient when Clara came into the world,

yet he lived to ſee her very old, and his off-ſpring to the third generation.

Cornaro was a man of underſtanding, merit and courage. He loved glory, and was naturally liberal, nevertheleſs without profuſeneſs. His youth was infirm; being very paſſionate and haſty; but when he perceived what damage the vices of his temper cauſed him, he reſolved to correct them, and had ſtrength enough over himſelf to conquer his paſſion, and thoſe extravagant humours to which he was ſubject. After this glorious victory, he became ſo moderate, mild, and affable, that he gained the eſteem and friendſhip of all that knew him.

He was extraordinary ſober, and obſerved the rules which he mentions in his writings, and dieted himſelf always with ſo much wiſdom and precaution, that finding his natural heat decaying by degrees in his old age, he alſo diminiſhed his diet by degrees, ſo far as to ſtint

himſelf to the yolk of an egg for a meal, and ſometimes, a little before his death, it ſerved him for two meals.

By this means he preſerved his health, and was alſo vigorous, to the age of an hundred years; his mind did not decay, he never had need of ſpectacles, neither loſt he his hearing.

And that which is no leſs true, than difficult to believe, is, that he preſerved his voice ſo clear and harmonious, that at the end of his life he ſang with as much ſtrength and delight, as he did at the age of twenty five years.

He had foreſeen that he ſhould live long without any infirmity, and was not deceived in it. When he felt that his laſt hour drew near, he diſpoſed himſelf to leave this life with the piety of a Chriſtian, and the courage of a philoſopher. He made his will, and ſet all his affairs in order; after which he received the laſt ſacraments, and ex-

pected death patiently in an elbow-chair. In ſhort, it may be ſaid, that being in good health, feeling no manner of pain, having alſo his mind and eye very briſk, a little fainting fit took him, which was inſtead of an agony, and made him fetch his laſt breath. He died at Padua, the 26th of April, 1566, and was buried the 8th of May following.

His wife died ſome years after him. Her life was long, and her old age as happy as that of her ſpouſe, only her latter days were not altogether like his. Some time before her death, ſhe was ſeized with a lingring diſtemper, which brought her to her grave. She gave up her ſoul one night in her bed without any convulſive motions, and with ſo perfect tranquillity ſhe left this life, without being perceived.

This is all I can ſay of thoſe good people, by the idea which remains of them, from what I heard my deceaſed father, and ſome other friends

of Lewis Cornaro, ſay of them, who having lived ſo long after an extraordinary manner, deſerve not to die ſo ſoon in the memory of man.

CHAP. VI.

Authorities taken from the hiſtory of M. de Thou, and the dialogues of Cardan, concerning the method of prolonging a man's life, and preſerving his health.

THE extract of the 38th book of the hiſtory of Mr. preſident de Thou runs thus:

" Lewis Cornaro was an extraor-
" dinary and admirable inſtance of
" a long life; for he lived an hun-
" dred years, healthful in body, and
" ſound in mind. He was deſcended
" from one of the moſt illuſtrious
" families of Venice; but thro'
" ſome misfortune owing to his
" birth, he was excluded from all
" honours and publick employments

" in the ſtate. He marry'd at Udine,
" in Friuli, one Veronica, of the
" family of Spilemburg; and being
" in poſſeſſion of a good eſtate, he
" was very deſirous of having chil-
" dren to inherit it. In ſhort, what
" by the prayers he put up, and by
" the help of phyſicians, he con-
" quer'd the point; and his wife,
" whom he dearly lov'd, and who
" was pretty well gone in years, was
" brought to bed of a daughter,
" when he leaſt of all expected it.
" This daughter, nam'd Clara, was
" marry'd to John, the ſon of Fan-
" tini Cornaro, a rich family of Cy-
" prus; by whom ſhe had eight ſons,
" and three daughters.

" In a word, Lewis Cornaro, by
" his ſobriety, and the regimen he
" obſerv'd in his diet, corrected the
" infirmities he had contracted by
" intemperance in his youth; and,
" by the ſtrength of his reaſon, mo-
" derated his inclination and pro-
" penſity to anger: ſo that in his
" old age, he had as good a conſti-

" tution of body, and as mild and
" even tempered a mind, as before,
" in the flower of his youth, he was
" infirm and apt to fly out into a
" paſſion. He compoſed ſeveral trea-
" tiſes when he was very old; where-
" in he tells us of the irregularity of
" his former life, and of his reforma-
" tion, and the hopes he had of li-
" ving long. Nor was he miſtaken
" in his account; for he died calm-
" ly, and without any pain, (being
" above an hundred years old) at Pa-
" dua, where he had taken up his re-
" ſidence. His wife, almoſt as old as
" himſelf, ſurvived him; but within
" a ſhort time after, died a very eaſy
" death. They were both buried in
" St. Anthony's church, without
" any pomp, according as they had
" ordered by their laſt will and teſta-
" ment."

In the dialogue of Cardan, be-
tween a philoſopher, a citizen, and
an hermit, concerning the methods
of " prolonging a man's life, and
" preſerving his health;" Cardan in-

troduces the hermit diſcourſing thus:

" Whereas in ſolid nouriſhments, " and even in drinks, there are ſe- " veral things worthy our obſervati- " on; viz. their natural qualities, " and thoſe which they acquire by " the ſeaſoning of them; the order " and the time wherein we ought to " make uſe of them, without men- " tioning the quantity of thoſe very " aliments and drinks; it is not " without reaſon, that the queſtion " is aſked, which of theſe things is " to be regarded moſt?

" Some have declared themſelves " for the quantity; maintaining, " that it has in effect a greater ſhare " than any other thing, in the pre- " ſervation of health and life.

" The famous Lewis Cornaro, a " noble Venetian, was of this mind. " He treated on this ſubject at the age " of fourſcore, enjoying then a per- " fect ſoundneſs of body and mind. " This venerable old man, at the " age of thirty ſix, was ſeized with

" ſo violent a diſtemper, that his " life was deſpaired of. Ever after " that time he took care to eat juſt " the ſame quantity every meal: " and tho' he was not free from a " great many fatigues, and ſome " misfortunes, which occaſioned his " brother's death; yet the exactneſs " of his regimen preſerved him al- " ways in health, with an entire " freedom of mind.

" At ſeventy years of age, a coach " (in which he travelled) was over- " thrown, by which he was dragged " a great way, and wounded in " his head, and one of his legs and " arms put out. The phyſicians de- " ſpair'd of his recovery, and were " for applying a great many reme- " dies to him: but Cornaro tells us, " that being well ſatisfied of the tem- " perature of his humours, he re- " jected all the aſſiſtances of the " phyſicians, and was quickly cured.

" Nine years after, when he was " almoſt fourſcore, his friends, and " his very phyſicians, adviſed him

" to add two ounces to his ordinary
" diet. Within ten or twelve days
" after he fell ſick; the phyſicians
" gave him over, and he himſelf be-
" gan to fear the worſt; however,
" he recovered his health, tho' with
" much ado.

The ſame author adds, " that be-
" ing fourſcore years old, his ſight
" and hearing was ſound and good;
" that his voice held ſtrong; that he
" ſometimes ſang in conſort with
" his grand-children: that he could
" either ride, or walk a-foot very
" well; and that he compoſed a co-
" medy, which came off with ap-
" plauſe.

" This wiſe old gentleman was
" then of the opinion, that a regular
" and ſmall quantity of food con-
" tributed more than any thing elſe
" to the preſervation of health; for
" he makes no mention of his choice
" of diets. I am uſed, ſays Cornaro,
" to take, in all, twelve ounces of
" ſolid nouriſhment, ſuch as meat,
" and the yolk of an egg; and

" fourteen ounces of drink. It is
" to be lamented, that he did not
" preciſely tell us whether he took
" this quantity at once, or twice a
" day: however, ſince he tells us,
" that he did eat but a very little, it
" ſeems as if he did ſo but once a
" day.

" The famous civilian, Panigaro-
" lus, who lived above ſeventy years,
" though of a very weak conſtituti-
" on, never eat or drank above twen-
" ty eight ounces a day; which
" comes almoſt to the ſame quantity
" of Cornaro.

" I was intimately acquainted with
" one, who never took above thirty
" ſix ounces a day. It is true, in-
" deed, that every fortnight he pur-
" ged himſelf; but he lived to above
" ninety years of age.

" It ſeems then, as if Cornaro was
" minded to keep from us a perfect
" knowledge of his regimen, and on-
" ly to tell us, that he had found out
" an extraordinary one; ſince he has
" not informed us, whether he took

" the quantity he ſpeaks of, at once,
" or twice a day, nor whether he
" altered his diet; for he treats on
" that ſubject, as darkly and obſcure-
" ly as Hippocrates.

" It is likewiſe ſtrange, that the
" quantity of his liquid ſhould ex-
" ceed that of his ſolid diet; and the
" rather, becauſe what he did eat
" was not equally nouriſhing, ſince
" he took yolks of eggs, as well as
" meat. In truth, to me he ſeems
" to talk more like a philoſopher,
" than a phyſician.

Thus far Cardan: but, by his leave, if he had read what Cornaro has written concerning a ſober and regular life, with attention, he would have paſſed a ſounder judgment on his writings; for, in them, he not only ſpeaks of the quantity, but, in expreſs terms, diſcourſes of the quality of our diet.

Maxims to be obſerved for the prolonging of life.

'TIS not good to eat too much, or to faſt too long, or to do any thing elſe that is preternatural.

Whoever eats or drinks too much will be ſick.

The diſtempers of repletion are cured by abſtinence.

Old men can faſt eaſily; men of ripe age can faſt almoſt as much; but young perſons, and children, that are briſk and lively, can hardly faſt at all.

Growing perſons have a great deal of natural heat, which requires a great deal of nouriſh-

ment, elſe the body will pine away: but old men, who have but a little natural heat, require but a little food, too much overcharges them.

It muſt be examined, what ſort of perſons ought to feed once or twice a day, more or leſs; allowance being always made to the age of the perſon, to the ſeaſon of the year, to the place where one lives, and to cuſtom.

The more you feed foul bodies, the more you hurt yourſelves.

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FINIS.